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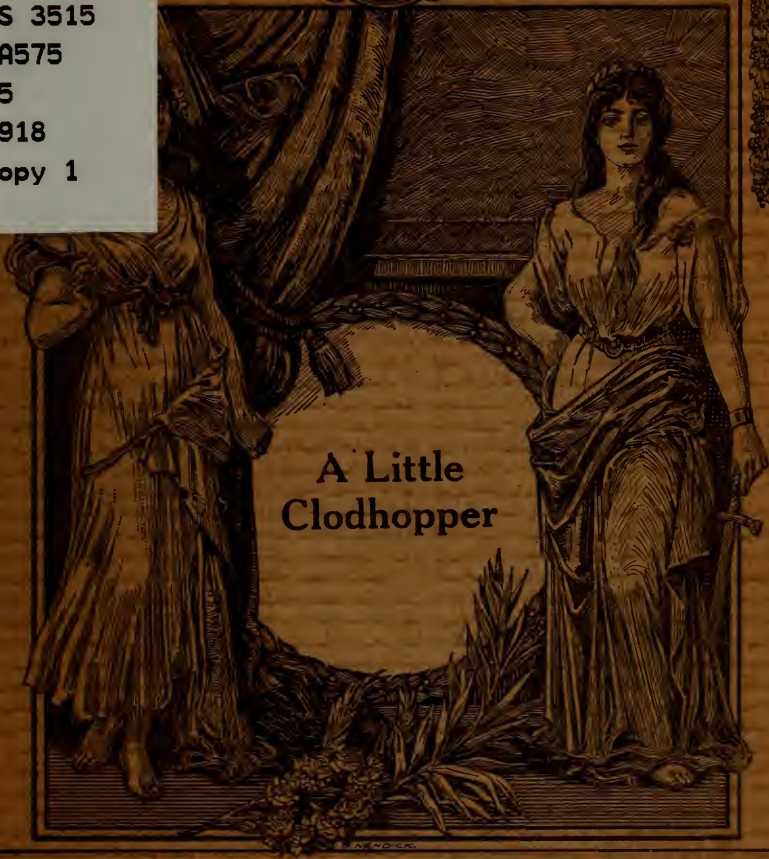
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1918

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A Little
Clodhopper

T.S. DENISON & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS CHICAGO

DENISON'S ACTING PLAYS

Partial List of Successful and Popular Plays. Large Catalogue Free.
Price 15c each, Postpaid, Unless Different Price is Given

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In Plum Valley, 4 acts, 2¼ hrs.	(25c)	6	4
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Man from Borneo, 3 acts, 2 hrs.	(25c)	5	2
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Mrs. Tubbs of Shantytown, 3 acts, 2¼ hrs.	(25c)	4	7
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Out in the Streets, 3 acts, 1 hr.		6	4
Parlor Matches, 2 acts, 1¼ hrs. (25c)		4	5
Poor Married Man, 3 acts, 2 hrs.	(25c)	4	4
Prairie Rose, 4 acts, 2¼ h. (25c) ..		7	4
Rummage Sale, 50 min.		4	10
Rustic Romeo, 2 acts, 2¼ hrs.	(25c)	10	12
Savageland, 2 acts, 2¼ hrs. (50c) ..		5	5
School Ma'am, 4 acts, 1¾ hrs.		6	5
Scrap of Paper, 3 acts, 2 hrs.		6	6
Sowing for the Heathen, 40 min.		9	
Southern Cinderella, 3 acts, 2 hrs.	(25c)	7	
Star Bright, 3 acts, 2¼ h. (25c) ..		6	5
Teacher, Kin I Go Home? 2 scenes, 35 min.		7	3
Those Dreadful Twins, 3 acts, 2 hrs.	(25c)	6	4
Thread of Destiny, 3 acts, 2¼ hrs.	(25c)	9	16
Tony, the Convict, 5 acts, 2¼ hrs.	(25c)	7	4
Town Marshal, 4 acts, 2¼ hrs.	(25c)	6	3
Trial of Hearts, 4 acts, 2¼ hrs. (25c)		6	18
Trip to Storyland, 1¼ hrs. (25c) ..		17	23
Uncle Josh, 4 acts, 2¼ hrs. (25c) ..		8	3
Under Blue Skies, 4 acts, 2 hrs.	(25c)	7	10
Under the Laurels, 5 acts, 2 hrs.		6	4
When the Circus Came to Town, 3 acts, 2¼ hrs. (25c) ..		5	3

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers, 154 W. Randolph St., Chicago

A LITTLE CLODHOPPER

AN AMERICAN COMEDY-DRAMA

IN THREE ACTS

BY

WALTER BEN HARE

AUTHOR OF MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED PLAYS

INCLUDING

"Aaron Boggs, Freshman," "Abbu San of Old Japan," "And Home Came Ted," "Civil Service," "A College Town," "A Country Boy Scout," "Deacon Dubbs," "A Dream of Queen Esther," "The Fascinators," "Kicked Out of College," "Laughing Water," "Macbeth a la Mode," "Mrs. Tubbs Does Her Bit," "Mrs. Tubbs of Shantytown," "An Old Fashioned Mother," "Parlor Matches," "A Poor Married Man," "Rose o' My Heart," "A Rustic Romeo," "Savageland," "Sewing for the Heathen," "A Southern Cinderella," "The White Christmas and Other Merry Christmas Plays," Etc.



CHICAGO

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

[1918]

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A LITTLE CLODHOPPER

CHARACTERS.

- SEPTIMUS GREEN.....*A Young Book Agent, Full of Pep*
 OCEY GUMP.....*A Fresh Country Product, by Heck!*
 GEORGE CHIGGERSON.*An Innocent Little Lamb from the City*
 MRS. CHIGGERSON-BOGGS
*His Doting Mamma, with a Smooth Scheme*
 MISS JULIETTA BEAN.....
*A Splinterville Boarding-house Keeper*
 CHARMIAN CARTER.....*Who Thinks She's a Vampire*
 JUDY.....*A Little Clodhopper from the Poor-house*
 COUNTRY FOLKS.

ACT I—Front room in Miss Bean's boarding-house. An evening in April. The theft!

ACT II—Two months later. A room in the city home of Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs. A couple of weddings. Out in the storm!

ACT III—Three weeks later. Same scene as Act. II. The man from Texas. Blackmail!

TIME—*The Present.*

PLACE—*Splinterville, Missouri, and the "city."*

TIME OF PLAYING—*About Two Hours.*

NOTICE.—Production of this play is free to amateurs, but the sole professional rights are reserved by the author, who may be addressed in care of the Publishers. Moving picture rights reserved.

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STORY OF THE PLAY.

The author's idea in writing "A Little Clodhopper" was to present to the public an effective comedy-drama of American life that could be produced with success almost anywhere and by amateurs with little or no experience and with very limited stage facilities in the way of scenery, costumes, properties, etc.

The play is a catchy, active comedy with dramatic climaxes at the end of each act. Judy is a little clodhopper from the poor-house—a merry, trusting, innocent, mischievous little romp. Her father deserted her years before, but now is a rich man in a hospital in Texas. He writes to the scheming Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs, who was the former matron of the poor-house, and asks her to locate his lost child. Mrs. Boggs, knowing that Judy is an heiress, determines to marry her to her son, George, a city dude.

The first act shows Miss Bean's boarding-house in the country where Judy is assisting in the kitchen. Mrs. Boggs arrives to take Judy to the city. But the child is wary and knows Mrs. Boggs to be a cruel woman and refuses to leave the country. A city actress, one Charmian Carter, is in love with George and follows him to the country. She learns of the plot to marry him to Judy and falsely accuses Judy of being a thief. Mrs. Boggs promises not to press the charge if the little clodhopper will consent to come with her to the city. Judy reluctantly consents and determines to prove that she is no thief. A dashing, talkative young book-agent, the sentimental Miss Julietta Bean, and the country boob, Ocey Gump, furnish unlimited comedy throughout the play.

In the second act, which takes place two months after the first, George has married Charmian without his mother's knowledge, and when she learns the truth she finds Judy of no more use to her and turns her out in the storm alone in the great city. She is rescued by the kind-hearted Ocey Gump, who has married Miss Bean and come to the city on a wedding "tower."

The third act takes place in Mrs. Boggs' home three weeks later. A man pretending to be Judy's father turns up to

claim his daughter. Mrs. Boggs tries to palm off Charmian as the heiress when the mysterious visitor tells them that he is not wealthy after all, but must live with his daughter and George, her husband. Mrs. Boggs orders him from the place and calls the police. Ocey, now a city policeman, answers the call and brings his wife, Julietta, and the little clodhopper Judy with him. All ends happily with the scheming Mrs. Boggs gratefully accepting an offer to play the piano in a moving-picture show to be managed by George and Charmian. Judy finds her father and learns that he is really the wealthy man she supposed him to be.

PROPERTIES.

Old fashioned country furniture.

Bandana for Ocey.

Knitting in bag for Mrs. C. B.

Card and bound book for Sep.

Roll of money wrapped in cloth for Mrs. C. B.

Old coat and hat for Judy.

Piano and fancy furniture for Acts I and II.

Money in purse for Mrs. C. B.

Knitting for Charmian.

Bell to be rung off stage (door-bell).

Rain effect (to be worked off stage, roll some dried peas around in a cigar box and tap with fingers on bass drum).

SYNOPSIS FOR PROGRAM.

ACT I—A birthday party in the country. The old maid and the boob. "When the chicken gits 'round to me there won't be nothin' left but half a gizzard and a tail-feather." The scheming Mrs. Boggs and her dainty son George, from the city. The party arrive. Green, the book-agent, who is not as green as he seems to be, joins the festivities. "The fellers is kissin' the girls jest awful, it wasn't no place fer a minister's son." Judy, the waif from the poor-house, is accused of theft. "I'll prove who's the thief—you or me!"

ACT II—The home of Mrs. Boggs in the city. Judy takes

a dancing lesson with sad results. "George ain't desperate enough to kill a full-grown Mizzoury muskeeter." Mrs. Boggs arranges the marriage between George and Judy, but her plans do not work out as she intended. Judy and the cute book-agent. "What is love?" Duet introduced. George marries Charmian and Judy is thrown out in the storm. Saved by Ocey, the boob from Splinterville.

ACT III—Same scene as Act II, three weeks later. George and Charmian have a troubled honeymoon obscured by a cloud—and Mrs. Boggs is the cloud. A blackmail scheme. Mrs. Boggs passes Charmian off as Judy. The sick old man from Texas. "You'll find your daughter back in the Splinterville poor-house." Mrs. Boggs calls the police. Ocey responds, bringing Judy with him. "You ain't my daddy at all." Mrs. Boggs decides to go to work. Septimus says, "I wouldn't trade places with a millionaire. Me and my little clodhopper!" Happy ending.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

SEPTIMUS—A bright, confident, loud speaking, good looking young chap of about 22. Neat summer costume. Straw hat. Calling cards and a bound book always in evidence. In Act II change costume to another summer suit and hat. In Act III wear white or gray wig, whiskers to match, also eyebrows of false hair. Line the face with gray grease-paint and wear old fashioned spectacles. Old man's suit, too large for him (he might use a little padding). Stetson hat. Heavy cane. Walk slowly and bend over. Use high-pitched, querulous voice, but not to point of burlesque. Note: The audience *must not* recognize Septimus until he throws off his disguise.

OCEY—Slow, stupid clodhopper. Freckled face, line eyes with white grease-paint, extend mouth slightly with red. Yellow or red crop wig and paint eyebrows to match it. Gingham shirt, striped socks, low shoes, overalls. In Act II he wears a tan suit much too small for him, celluloid collar, red necktie, small straw hat, large bouquet in button-

hole, white socks, etc. In Act III complete policeman's uniform, brass buttons, helmet, club, etc.

GEORGE—A city dude. Very stylish summer suits throughout the play. Acts wishy-washy at all times. This is a great character part and never fails to make the audience scream with laughter at its absurdities.

MRS. CHIGGERSON-BOGGS—A tall, commanding woman of 45. Must have a loud, clear-speaking voice and some dramatic ability as this is the most difficult rôle in the play. Gray hair. Summer dresses in the height of fashion. Change for each act.

MISS JULIETTA BEAN—Caricature old maid. Side curls or hair in extravagant knob at back or on top. Large comb. Old fashioned costumes of brilliant colors. Artificial flowers, feathers, jewelry, lodge badges, etc., add to the baroque effect. Face wrinkled with gray grease-paint.

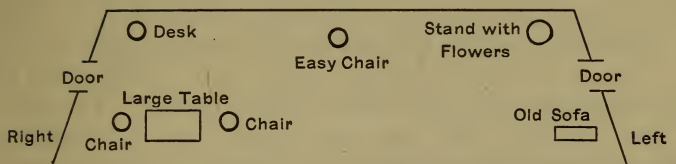
CHARMIAN—Handsome brunette of about 22. Large white hat, white coat suit and summer furs for Act I. Extravagant summer street costume in Act II, and beautiful house dress in Act III.

JUDY—Soubrette star rôle. Wig of long yellow curls. Ragged shoes and torn stockings in Act I with tattered short skirt, torn waist and old coat and hat. Neat summer dress (longer) in Act II. Neat street dress (summer) in Act III, with summer furs, etc.

COUNTRY FOLKS—Extravagant, old fashioned party costumes (summer).

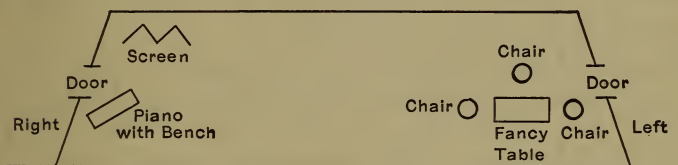
SCENE PLOT.

ACT I.



Rag carpet on floor. Stand of flowers in rear left corner. Old fashioned furniture.

ACTS II AND III.



STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of stage; C., center; R. C., right center; L., left; 1 E., first entrance; U. E., upper entrance; R 3 E., right entrance up stage, etc.; up stage, away from footlights; down stage, near footlights. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

A LITTLE CLODHOPPER

ACT I.

An evening in April.

SCENE: *Miss Bean's sitting-room. Rag carpet. Plenty of old fashioned furniture. Old sofa at left front. Large table with three chairs at right front. Easy chair at center rear. Stand of bright flowers at left rear. A fireplace may appear at right rear, but this is not essential. Use all the old-time furniture that you can borrow for this scene, but do not overcrowd the stage.*

When the curtain rises OCEY GUMP is discovered seated in easy chair at rear center facing the audience. He is sound asleep, his feet are stretched out in front of him and a bandana handkerchief is over his eyes. He snores at intervals. There is a pronounced pause long enough for the audience to absorb the picture.

JULIETTA BEAN (*off the stage at right*). Ocey, Ocey, where are you? I do declare that boy'll be the death of me. (*Calls*) Ocey, Ocey Gump! (*She enters from right and comes down front to center, not seeing OCEY.*) I'll bet a red apple he's asleep somewhere. He sleeps more than any hired man I ever had on the place, but he's the cutest thing! (*OCEY snores.*) And he's got the most musical voice of any boy in Splinterville, Missouri. (*OCEY snores.*) Oh, would you look at that! (*Advances toward him, keeping on right of stage.*) It's him. I'd know them feet if I met 'em on the golden streets of Jericho. Ain't he the cutest thing! (*OCEY snores.*) I reckon that fly is pestering him. (*OCEY slaps at imaginary fly.*) Ain't he a reg'lar moving picture. Every motion is just full of grace.

OCEY GUMP (*slaps viciously at fly, falls from chair to floor, awakens and rubs eyes*). Say, who hit me?

JULIETTA (*at rear right*). Nobody hit you. It was only a fly.

OCEY. Well, shoo him away. (*Goes to sleep on floor.*)

JULIETTA (*goes to him and shakes him*). Here, here, Ocey, wake up. It's after five o'clock and my company will begin to come pretty soon. Wake up! (*Shakes him.*)

OCEY (*sings*). Please go way and let me sleep.

JULIETTA. Wake up. It's time for the party. (*He snores.*) I've got the supper all on the table.

OCEY (*suddenly awakes and sits upright*). Supper? Did you say supper?

JULIETTA. That's what I said. Have you forgot what day this is?

OCEY (*gets up lazily*). I dunno what day it is, but I know it's April.

JULIETTA (*at rear, right of center*). It's my birthday, Ocey. And I just finished setting the table. We got seven kinds of cake.

OCEY (*standing near her, but at rear C.*). Seven? (*Rolls his eyes upward.*) Oh, happy day!

JULIETTA. And stewed chicken and dumplings, baked ham and all the fixings and two whole fried chickens.

OCEY (*rolls eyes as before*). Jerusalem, I'm glad I'm living.

JULIETTA (*nearer to him*). The ice cream is all froze and the mince pie is just a-oozing through the crust.

OCEY (*with closed lips*). Umm, umm! Let her ooze, Miss Bean, let her ooze.

JULIETTA. And cider! Aunt Serilly Sourdough sent me purt' nigh five gallon. And you're going to set right next to me at the table. You got to do the carving.

OCEY (*smiles changing to gloom*). Who is?

JULIETTA. Why, you, of course.

OCEY. That means that I gotta pass it to everybody else afore I gits mine, don't it? (*She nods.*) Yes, and by the time that there chicken gits around to me there won't be nothin' left 'ceptin' half a gizzard and a tail-feather. You got some awful hogs invited to your party, Miss Bean.

JULIETTA. Very well, then, I'll do the carving myself.

OCEY. Gimme plenty of white meat, Miss Julietta, and I don't keer who gits the drumsticks.

JULIETTA. Well, go out and get some wood for the kitchen stove and then help Samantha dish up the ice cream.

OCEY. Yes'm, I'm a goin'. (*Crosses to door at right.*) But remember to go kinder easy on them gizzards, but go as fur as you please on the white meat. I certainly do love my chicken. (*Exits at right.*)

JULIETTA (*looking after him*). Ain't he the cutest thing?
Enter MRS. CHIGGERSON-BOGGS *from left, followed by* GEORGE CHIGGERSON. *She carries knitting.*

MRS. CHIGGERSON-BOGGS (*comes to left of center*). Miss Bean, I've been wanting to speak to you.

JULIETTA (*comes to her at center*). Yes? I hope you found your room all right.

MRS. C. B. (*sits at front, on sofa left of center*). Oh, yes, it is quite as well as could be expected here in the country. Of course it isn't like our place at home, but I can put up with it. I would like to have you put an extra quilt on Georgie's bed. He's delicate, you know.

JULIETTA. All right, Mrs. Boggs.

MRS. C. B. Chiggerston-Boggs, Miss Bean, with a hyphen.

JULIETTA. Oh, yes, I meant Chiggerston-Boggs.

MRS. C. B. And we want all of our meals to be served in our rooms.

JULIETTA. Very well, but that'll be extr'y.

MRS. C. B. Oh, that makes no difference to me. Georgie can't bear to eat in the dining-room with other boarders. He's so refined. (*Looks at George, who is seated at front left.*) Straighten up your shoulders, Georgie.

GEORGE. But, mothah, it hurts to keep 'em straight all the time. I can't stand it. I simply can't stand it.

MRS. C. B. Very well, then, keep them as straight as you can. You're not sitting in a draft, are you?

GEORGE (*impatently*). Of course not.

MRS. C. B. It would be fatal if you sat in a draft.

JULIETTA (*standing at right front, speaks to audience*). A good strong draft might blow him away.

MRS. C. B. He's such a delicate young man. Have you any other boarders in the house at present, Miss Bean?

JULIETTA. Just one. He's a lovely young man. His name is Green. Septimus Green, and he sells books. (*Crosses to center front.*)

MRS. C. B. Georgie, you mustn't associate with him until I'm sure that he is quite proper. (*Looks at JULIETTA.*) I have to be so careful with Georgie. He's been as carefully brought up as a princess of the royal blood. I hope this Mr. Green hasn't any bad habits.

JULIETTA. Oh, I'm sure he ain't. Just smokes a little maybe.

MRS. C. B. (*to George*). Son, you positively mustn't associate with him. Mamma won't allow it.

JULIETTA. Doesn't your son smoke?

MRS. C. B. Smoke? Georgie, smoke? With *his* heart?

JULIETTA. No, I mean with his mouth. A cigar or a pipe.

MRS. C. B. Certainly not. It would be fatal for him to smoke.

GEORGE. But I'm going to some day, mothah. Just as soon as I'm twenty-two.

MRS. C. B. Never.

GEORGE. I will. You promised me I could as soon as I was twenty-two. If I can't smoke I'll go in swimming and take cold and get the pneumonia.

MRS. C. B. But it will make you deathly sick to smoke, and it's such a nasty habit.

GEORGE. All the other fellows smoke, mothah. Some of 'em aren't as old as I am. I'm over twenty-one and I think you should allow me to do as I please.

MRS. C. B. But you are so delicate.

GEORGE. I don't care if I am; I'm going to try it anyway.

MRS. C. B. (*turns to JULIETTA, who has acted disgusted at the preceding conversation*). Miss Bean, I don't suppose you remember me?

JULIETTA. Your face does seem kind of familiar. When I saw you get off the train this morning I said to Ocey

Gump, Ocey's my hired man, I says, "Ocey, I've seen her before," but I can't fer the life of me think where.

MRS. C. B. I used to live here in Splinterville.

JULIETTA (*astonished*). You did?

MRS. C. B. Ten years ago I was the matron at the poor-house. I was only here a year and I don't like to talk about it. I was Mrs. Chiggerson then. You remember it, don't you, Georgie? You were eleven years old.

GEORGE (*languidly*). Oh, no, mothah, I never remember anything.

MRS. C. B. Then I moved to the city and married Mr. Boggs. Mr. Cyrus K. Boggs of the Boggs Lumber Corporation. Poor Cyrus! (*Puts handkerchief to her eyes.*) He died eight years ago, and I've been a widow ever since.

JULIETTA. That's too bad.

MRS. C. B. (*looks at GEORGE*). Georgie, your mouth is open.

GEORGE. Yes, mothah, I opened it.

MRS. C. B. You'd better close it, son. You look ever so much more intellectual with your mouth closed.

GEORGE. Yes, mothah. (*Closes mouth, stares at audience.*)

MRS. C. B. My visit to Splinterville, Miss Bean, is for a twofold purpose. First, I have sold the old Biggins place.

JULIETTA (*much interested*). You have? Who to?

MRS. C. B. To Ezra Beanbiler. I'm to meet him at the lawyer's office at half past five.

JULIETTA. Well, well, well! I reckon he's going to git married to Jennie Weathersby at last.

MRS. C. B. And, secondly, I have decided to adopt a little girl who used to be at the Orphan Asylum. Maybe you can tell me what has become of her. Let me see, she's about seventeen years old now. Her name is Judy Elliott. Do you know her?

JULIETTA. Know Judy? Well, I reckon I do. Everybody in the county knows Judy.

MRS. C. B. Is she still at the poor-house?

JULIETTA. Yes, she is, that is, off and on. They've got

her a dozen or more places but she don't seem to hold 'em. She'd rather work in the fields with the men. Folks hereabouts call her the little clodhopper.

MRS. C. B. That is worse than I feared. I suppose she's a perfect little heathen?

JULIETTA. No'm, she ain't. She's got a real good heart and she kin work as good as a man. She's just full of mischief, that's all. Was you figgerin' on takin' her to the city?

MRS. C. B. Yes, that is if I can stand her. I remember when she was a little child at the poor-house she was very wilful. But I took quite a liking to her and I intend to employ her as a maid.

Enter SEPTIMUS GREEN from left, followed by three or four country boys and girls.

SEPTIMUS. Come right in, folks. Here's our fair hostess now. Miss Bean, Miss Julietta Bean, your party is arriving. *(Stands at rear left.)*

JULIETTA. Dear, dear! *(Shakes hands with boys and girls.)* I certainly am glad to see all of you. Come in and make yourselves to home. Take off your things and bring them in here. *(Leads boys and girls off to right.)*

SEPTIMUS *(comes down center, speaks to Mrs. C. B.)*. Ah, madam, a stranger? Allow me to introduce myself. I am Septimus Green, of Greenville, Green County, Green Township in the Green Bay State. My name is Green, madam, but I'm not as green as I seem to be. Have a card. *(Offers a card.)*

MRS. C. B. No, thank you.

SEPTIMUS *(puts card in his pocket)*. Oh, very well. A trivial circumstance, but no matter, no matter at all. Before I deign to ask your name, if you will permit a little business before pleasure, madam, I am a public benefactor.

MRS. C. B. Indeed?

SEPTIMUS. Yes, madam, I am doing my bit to enlighten a benighted public by spreading before them a wonderful work of knowledge, four volumes bound in half calf, nearly three thousand pages, to be exact two thousand eight hun-

dred and ninety-four, two hundred and twelve illustrations and thirty hand-colored plates. Now, madam, the book—

MRS. C. B. I am not interested in books, young man. I have a library full of books at my town house.

SEPTIMUS. That may be, madam, but there is no book like my wonderful book of knowledge. See here is the first volume (*produces book*). Chapter one is on the Origin of Man.

MRS. C. B. (*rises*). Young man, I am a boarder here in this house and I do not intend to be bored by you.

SEPTIMUS (*laughs*). That's good. That's awfully good. You're just like the end man in the minstrel show. You are a boarder, but you won't be bored. Ha, ha! You ought to see the third volume of my wonderful book. It is called Jokes, Jingles and Witty Sayings. You'd just laugh yourself to death if you read that volume.

Enter JULIETTA from right.

JULIETTA. Have any more of the folks come?

SEPTIMUS. No, I don't think so. Many happy returns of your birthday, Miss Bean. May you live to be a hundred and have every wish your little heart desires. (*He goes to JULIETTA at right and shakes hands with her.*)

JULIETTA (*giggles*). Oh, Mr. Green, you do say the loveliest things!

MRS. C. B. Miss Bean, I suppose the lawyer's office is down by the postoffice in the same old place?

JULIETTA. Yes'm, things ain't changed much in Splinterville in the past forty years.

MRS. C. B. Then I'd better hurry. Ezry Beanbiler wrote me that he'd meet me there at half past five. Georgie, be a good boy while mamma's away. You will, won't you?

GEORGE. Oh, yes, mothah.

MRS. C. B. (*hands him knitting bag*). Here, you finish this garment while I'm gone. It will keep you out of mischief. (*GEORGE knits.*)

GEORGE. Yes, mothah.

MRS. C. B. (*to JULIETTA*). He's such an active boy. (*Exits at left.*)

SEPTIMUS (*crosses down to GEORGE*). My boy, let me sell you a copy of my wonderful book. Here in the third volume you'll find everything that was ever written about knitting. You'll be simply wild over that volume. It's called *The Housewife's Complete Manual* with five hundred ways of cooking eggs. See, here's a picture—

GEORGE (*interrupts*). Mothah never allows me to buy books for myself. And besides I haven't any money. Mothah always carries the purse.

Enter OCEY from right.

OCEY. Oh, Mis' Bean, Mis' Bean! They're a playin' Spin the Plate in the spare rooms and the fellers is a kissin' the girls, jest awful. I thought I'd better git out. Wasn't no place fer a minister's son.

JULIETTA (*throws up hands in horror*). Kissin' 'em?

OCEY (*seriously*). Right on the nose and mouth and everywhere. Big, fat Lucindy Filter started after me and I run like old Sam Hill.

SEPTIMUS. Say, boy, lead me to it! Kissing is my middle name. (*Starts to right*).

OCEY (*pulls him back by coat-tails*). You'd better not go in there, mister, it's dangerous.

SEPTIMUS. If kissing is dangerous then I'm the bravest man that ever carried a musket. (*Puts books on table*). No time to sell my books, show me the way, lead me to battle, forward to the fray! (*Exits at right, stalking out with long strides*).

GEORGE (*rises*). I think I'll take a nap in my room. I've worked quite enough for one day.

OCEY. Worked?

GEORGE. Yes, worked! (*Knitting*). Just see how much I've purled. Oh, sugar! You made me drop a stitch.

JULIETTA. Never mind, Georgie, I'll fix it for you tomorrow. Now you go right in there in the spare room and have a good time with the young folks.

GEORGE. But I can't, you know. I haven't been introduced.

OCEY. Oh, that's all right. They hain't perticuler. And

once you git big, fat Lucindy Filter after you you'll never know whether you've been interduced er not. She's the kissingest gal in Splinterville.

GEORGE. Aren't they awfully rough?

OCEY. Naw, not at all. Go on in, Georgie, you'll have the time of your young life.

GEORGE. I believe I will. I'm always awfully popular with the girls at home. (*Crosses to door right*). But I'm not going to let any of them kiss me. It isn't ladylike. (*Exit right*.)

JULIETTA (*at rear center, coming down a little to front*). Ocey, you hadn't orter call him Georgie. His maw wouldn't like it. She's real particular about what folks call 'em, though I used to know her when she was only the matron at the poor-house, long before she was Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs.

OCEY (*at her right, laughs*). Is that her name?

JULIETTA. Certainly. She is Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs.

OCEY (*surprised*). Chiggers and bugs? Honest? (JULIETTA *nods*). Then that explains it.

JULIETTA. Explains what?

OCEY. I been a itchin' ever sence she set foot inside this here house. Chiggers an' bugs, I never heerd sich a name!

JULIETTA. Not chiggers and bugs, Chiggerson-Boggs!

OCEY. What's the difference?

JULIETTA. You jest twist yer mouth a little more, that's all.

OCEY. I'll bet a sugar doughnut with a hole in the middle that ef I ever talk to her I'll git her name all mixed up and call her cockroaches.

JULIETTA. Don't you dare! She'd take your head off.

OCEY. What's she a doin' here?

JULIETTA. She owns the old Biggins place and she's goin' to sell it to Ezry Beanbiler. And she said sump'm about adoptin' Judy fer a hired gal.

OCEY. Judy?

JULIETTA. Yes, Judy Elliott.

OCEY. That little clodhopper never could be a hired gal. She ain't got sense enough.

JULIETTA. Well it ain't our picnic. We'll leave that to Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs.

OCEY (*laughs*). I have to laugh every time I hear that name. Say, ef the old lady is chiggers and bugs, I reckon that there boy of hers is beetles and ticks. (*Laughs.*)

JULIETTA. Don't you get so familiarity when you address him.

OCEY (*stupidly*). When I what?

JULIETTA. When you address him you must call him Mr. Chiggerson.

OCEY. Say, I ain't a goin' to dress him. I got enough work to do on this yere place without tryin' to dress no city dudes. If he can't dress himself, dog-gone, he kin go undressed.

JULIETTA. Ocey Gump, you hush up. Such talk ain't delicate, at all. Besides I said *a*-dress, not dress.

OCEY. I ain't a goin' to *a*-dress him neither. He looks to me like one of these yere pictures you see in a mail order catalogue.

JULIETTA. I think he's a real sweet man, I do. And he's as refined and polite and delicate as a little teeny, tiny rosebud. There!

OCEY. Why, Julietta Bean, I bet you're goin' to set your cap fer him.

JULIETTA. Well, if some folks is too slow to take a hint, there's others that hain't. I never could stand a man who didn't have no git-up-an-git to him, but jest sets around like a thousand legged worm with the rheumatics in each foot. (*Turns on him angrily*). And what's more I want you to understand that I'm a timid, modest, bashful young lady who don't set her cap fer *no* man!

OCEY. Now, Julietta Bean, don't let's git quarrelin', on yer birthday, too.

JULIETTA (*shakes shoulders*). Who's a quarrelin'? I'm jest a arguin', Ocey Gump, and if it ain't a young lady's

privilege to argue I'd like to know why not. (*Crosses from center to left front.*)

(*Music, eight bars. Great noise and racket off left.*)

OCEY. What's that?

JULIETTA (*looks out of window or door*). It's someone out at the well.

OCEY. Bet five cents it's Judy. She's always at the bottom of everything trifling. Looks like she's at the bottom of the well.

JUDY *sticks her head in door, sees folks, goes out and knocks.*

OCEY (*at right front*). Crazy as a bat! Come in, come in, you triflin' critter.

Enter JUDY ELLIOTT from left.

JULIETTA (*at left front*). Land sakes, ain't she a sight?

OCEY. Come here. (*She slides one slide toward him.*)
Come here. (*Another slide.*) Come here! (*She slides to him.*) What was you doin' out there?

JUDY (*whispers*). Drinkin'.

OCEY. What?

JUDY (*whispers*). Drinkin'.

OCEY. Louder.

JUDY (*yells*). Drinkin'!

OCEY. Well, you must be a hard drinker. (*She nods.*)
Did you swaller the well bucket?

JUDY. Nope. I jest went to take a drink out'n the well-bucket (*in sing-song tone*) and the rope flew off, and the handle flew round, and round and round and round, and the bucket flew down and down and down. And all of a sudden it hit the bottom (*slaps hands suddenly*) ker-chug!

JULIETTA. Well, what brings you here, Judy?

JUDY. I heerd you was goin' to have a party and I come. Surprised, ain't you? Well, that makes it a surprise party.

JULIETTA. But you wasn't invited.

JUDY. Oh, that don't make no difference to me. I ain't stuck up. You didn't hurt my feelings by not inviting me, so I jest come anyway.

JULIETTA. Well, I never!

JUDY. I never either, so I jest thought I'd take a chance. You ain't goin' to turn me out, are you?

JULIETTA. No, I don't reckon I am. You kin stay in the kitchen and help wash up the dishes. Only don't get in the way.

JUDY (*sits on table at right and swings her feet*). Oh, don't you worry about me, I won't git in the way. I know how to act at a party. I've got real good manners even if I am a little clodhopper. And besides I didn't come here to git in the way. I peeked in your back winder to see what was goin' on and I seen 'em all a spinnin' the plate and kissin' the gals. That hain't what I come fer! No, ma'am. I come to git sump'n good to eat. I peeked in the kitchen and saw you was goin' to have chicken and ice-cream, and right then I made up my mind that I was comin' to your party, invite er no invite. So here I am.

JULIETTA (*seated on sofa*). Well, I don't allow one more'll make much difference, Judy, though I must say your appetite is the biggest thing about you.

(OCEY *has crossed to window or door at left and is looking out.*)

OCEY. Miss Julietta, here comes some more folks to your party. It's Deacon Hardtack and cousin Jemimy Jiblets, and two or three more. (*Opens left door.*) Come right in, folks. Come right in.

Enter several farmers and farm-women dressed in their best.

JULIETTA (*shaking hands with them*). My, my, Deacon, I'm tickled e'en a most to death to see you. Looking so well, too. Cousin Jemimy Jiblets, I ain't seen you since Grandma Spuggses' funeral. How you been? And Lizy and John! Ocey, take 'em in the back spare room. Come in here and lay off your things. (*Leads them to door at right, talking all the time.*) It certainly does me good to have all my old friends come in to see me on my birthday. I only got three boarders now. What do you think? That Mis' Chiggerson who used to be the matron at the poor-

house is here boardin' with me. Her and Georgie. (OCEY leads the extra people out at right.)

JUDY. Did you say Mis' Chiggerson was here? (Comes to left of table.)

JULIETTA. Yes. You don't remember her, do you?

JUDY. I reckon I do. I was her star boarder at the poor-house fer pretty near a year. I was only six, but I remember how she used to pinch me till I was black and blue and green. The day I heard she was going to git married and leave I sang "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" nine hundred and eighty-seven times.

JULIETTA. She was asking me about you this evening.

JUDY. What fur?

JULIETTA. She said as how maybe she'd adopt you as a hired girl.

JUDY. Nothing doing, nothing doing! The poor-house is bad enough, but bein' a hired gal to old Mis' Chiggerson 'ud be a heap sight worse.

JULIETTA. Now don't you be foolish, Judy. Maybe she'll give you a nice home and an eddication and everything.

JUDY. Maybe she will, but the chances are nine thousand to one that she won't. (Still seated on the table.)

JULIETTA. You go out in the kitchen and help the cook set the table. I've got to see to my party. Don't git into any mischief. (Hurries out at right.)

JUDY (mimics her). Don't git into any mischief. (Snaps.) All right! I never git into mischief of my own accord. I start out to be real good, but I'm so unlucky it seems jest like the mischief gits into me.

GEORGE (heard outside at right). Here, now, you let me alone! Mothah, mothah!

GEORGE runs in from right, followed by the extra girls, who are laughing loudly. He is much frightened and runs around the sofa, the girls after him. Note: The girls must laugh loudly, yell, etc., all making plenty of noise.

JUDY (stands on the table and claps her hands). Sic him, sic him! Now you got him. Look at him dodge. Run, boy, run er they'll kiss you sure.

(GEORGE runs around table, the girls following him.)

GEORGE. Let me alone! Don't be so rough. Mothah! Mothah!

(JUDY jumps down and confronts the girls at center. GEORGE crawls under the table at right, the girls huddle at left.)

JUDY. Stand back, villains, don't you dare harm an innocent hair of his innocent head!

(Girls run to door at right laughing and run out at right.)

GEORGE (sticks his head out from under the table). Have they gone?

JUDY (standing at center looking at him). Yep, they've gone. You kin come out.

GEORGE (comes out). My, my, I'm so nervous. I never saw such a rough lot of girls in all my life. Not at all lady-like.

JUDY. Aw, put on the brakes, put on the brakes, kid, you're skiddin'. (Sits on table and swings feet.)

GEORGE (totters to sofa and falls on it, fanning himself weakly). Oh, such a horrible experience. Several of those awful girls tried to kiss me. And we'd never even been introduced. I'm frustrated, simply frustrated.

JUDY. Swim fer the shore, boy, swim fer the shore. You're over your head.

GEORGE. I never saw such rude persons in all my life. Positively vulgar. I shall beg mothah to return to the city at once.

JUDY. Say, you ain't little Georgie Chiggerson, are you?

GEORGE. Yes, that is my name, but I don't remember you.

JUDY. Don't you remember little Judy Elliott, the girl you pushed in the snow back of the poor-house? The girl you tried to sic your dog on? The girl who licked the stuffin' outa you?

GEORGE. Surely you're not——

JUDY. Yep, that's me. I'm Judy and I'm still the star boarder of the poor-house.

GEORGE. Then you must be the girl mothah has come

after. She's going to take you away to the city with her. She's going to make a lady out of you.

JUDY. Oh, no, she ain't.

GEORGE. Oh, yes, she is.

JUDY (*speaking simultaneously with GEORGE*). Oh, no, she ain't.

GEORGE (*speaking at the same time*). Oh, yes, she is.

JUDY (*loudly*). She ain't, she ain't, she ain't!

GEORGE. Oh, but she is. Mothah's made up her mind, you know.

JUDY. Then she's got to unmake it, fer I ain't goin' to be a lady. I'm lady enough now.

GEORGE (*comes to center, faces JUDY, stares at her*). Lady? You're not a lady.

JUDY (*jumps down and faces him*). Who ain't a lady?

GEORGE. You're only a little ragamuffin.

JUDY (*swings her right arm around and feels her arm muscle*). Don't you call me names! Don't you call me no ragamuffin.

GEORGE. You're a stray, that's what you are, a little ragged stray from the poor-house.

JUDY. Well, anyhow, I won't go with your mother. She used to beat and pinch me. I won't go with her. She's a old cat.

GEORGE (*raises his hand to slap her*). Don't you dare call mothah a cat!

JUDY (*swings her right arm*). Come on and hit me, come on and hit me!

GEORGE (*slaps her on the shoulder*). There, now! (*She doubles up her fist and fights him like a man, he screaming and slapping at her like a girl. She finally strikes him and he falls on sofa, she swaggers to right, feeling her muscle. GEORGE moans.*)

JUDY. Now, who says I ain't a perfect lady?

Enter MRS. C. B. from left.

MRS. C. B. Oh, what do I see? My son wounded? (*Comes to right of sofa.*) What is it, Georgie? Speak to mother. What is it?

GEORGE. She struck me. She struck me with her fist.
(*Weeps.*)

MRS. C. B. (*turns on JUDY, who is at right*). Did you dare to lay hands on my son?

JUDY. Yes, I did. He said I wasn't no lady——

GEORGE. And you're not ——

JUDY (*springs at him, MRS. C. B. pulls her off and pushes her to right*). I'll show you. He said you wanted to take me to the city.

MRS. C. B. Surely you are not Judy Elliott?

JUDY. That's me name. Yours affectionately, Judy Elliott, esquire.

MRS. C. B. (*changes her tone as she approaches JUDY*). Why, you dear, sweet little child, I'd never have known you. How you have grown.

JUDY. Grown, have I? Maybe I did. I made little Georgie groan, too.

MRS. C. B. Now, Judy, dear, you and Georgie mustn't quarrel. Ladies don't quarrel.

JUDY. He picked on me first. And I ain't goin' to let nobody pick on me.

MRS. C. B. Georgie, you've been a naughty boy. (*Turns to JUDY.*) But you mustn't mind him. He won't do it any more. I want you and Georgie to be real, good friends.

JUDY. I don't want to be no friends with him.

MRS. C. B. Yes, you do. And Georgie forgives you, don't you, Georgie?

GEORGE. Yes, mothah, I'll forgive her if she don't do it again.

MRS. C. B. Now, you see, he forgives you. Now shake hands like a good little girl. I'm going to be your friend, Judy. I'm going to help you and so is Georgie.

JUDY. Georgie'd better let me alone. I don't like him nohow.

MRS. C. B. But you must be friends. Now, shake hands.

JUDY. Well, if I must, I reckon I must. (*Sighs.*) But if he ever sasses me again he'll wake up in the hospital, 'cause this arm (*shows left fist*) means hospital, and this one

(*shows right fist*) means sudden death. (*Advances toward him.*) But I'll shake hands. (*Offers hand.*)

GEORGE (*dodges*). Don't you hit me!

MRS. C. B. George, shake hands with her at once.

GEORGE. Yes, mothah. (*They shake hands.*)

Enter SEPTIMUS from right.

SEPTIMUS. Well, if it isn't my old friend Judy.

JUDY (*goes to him at right.*) Hello, Mister Green.

SEPTIMUS. I didn't expect to see you at the party.

JUDY. Nope, neither did Miss Bean. I just dropped in.

(*Mrs. C. B. talks in pantomime to GEORGE on the sofa.*)

SEPTIMUS. Miss Bean asked me to find you and tell you to help wait on the table.

JUDY. All right, I'm ready. Say, Mr. Green, do me a favor?

SEPTIMUS. Sure. What is it?

JUDY. Kinder go easy on them chickens. They ain't got much and I certainly have got a great big number twelve appetite.

SEPTIMUS (*laughs*). I'll remember.

JUDY. I knowed you would, 'cause you're all right. I kinder like you, Mr. Green.

SEPTIMUS. I kinder like you, too, Judy.

JUDY. Aw, you like all the girls. I seen you last Monday night hugging Liza Lemon on the church steps. (*Laughs.*) I have to laugh. You was a regular lemon squeezer. But I won't tell. Only the next time you squeeze a lemon you wanten use plenty of sugar. (*Laughs and runs out at right.*)

SEPTIMUS. Here, wait a minute! (*Runs out at right after her.*)

MRS. C. B. George, I don't know what will become of you. Here you have started a quarrel with Judy and I wanted you to be particularly nice to her.

GEORGE. I don't see why. I can't run around being nice to little rag-bags from the poor-house.

MRS. C. B. Poor-house, indeed! George, listen to me, that girl is worth over a hundred thousand dollars.

GEORGE. Aw, mothah! Why, if she's got all that money why don't she buy some proper clothes and things?

MRS. C. B. Because she doesn't know she has it. No one knows except myself. That is the real object of my visit to this horrible place.

GEORGE. I thought you wanted to sell some property.

MRS. C. B. I did, and I sold it. Here is the money. Twelve hundred dollars. (*Shows money wrapped up in bandana-handkerchief.*) You take it and put it under your pillow. Tomorrow we will return to the city and Judy Elliott returns with us. (*He takes money.*)

GEORGE. Mothah, are you sure she's worth all that money?

MRS. C. B. Positive. Her father deserted her twelve years ago after the mother died. The child was left at the poor-house in my charge. The father went to Texas.

GEORGE. Ah!

MRS. C. B. Ten days ago I received a letter from him. They forwarded it to me from the poor-house. He thought that I was still the matron. He offers me a thousand dollars to get the girl and bring her to him at San Antonio.

GEORGE. Why doesn't he come after her?

MRS. C. B. Because he is very sick in the hospital. He has been a hard man but has made a little fortune. Now he intends to atone for his past cruelty and make this little girl his sole heiress. Over a hundred thousand dollars, George. Think of it! And she doesn't know it. It's a chance in a million.

GEORGE. What do you mean by chance, mothah?

MRS. C. B. I mean that you are to marry this girl Judy.

GEORGE. I? Marry that little clodhopper?

MRS. C. B. She won't be a clodhopper long, my son. She shall return to the city with me. I'll keep her for a few months before I take her to her father in San Antonio and you must make hay while the sun shines.

GEORGE. Make hay, mothah? I don't know what you mean. I cawn't make hay.

MRS. C. B. You must marry the girl. Now, do you understand?

Enter JULIETTA and JUDY from right.

JULIETTA. Take off your coat, Judy, and put it on the table. Then tell cook to give you an apron.

JUDY. Yes'm. (*Puts coat and hat on table.*)

MRS. C. B. Judy, how would you like to go to the city and live with me?

JUDY. I wouldn't like it.

MRS. C. B. But I'd treat you just like my little daughter. I can get your discharge from the poor-house and you'll be treated just like one of the family.

JUDY. Nope, I don't want'er go. Poor-house is plenty good enough for me. I ain't proud if I *am* beautiful.

MRS. C. B. But you would have everything you want in the city. You'd be a lady.

JUDY. Nope, I ain't a-goin'. It's too much trouble to be a lady. Mr. Green done told me all about city ladies. You gotta play keerds and put red stuff on your cheeks and whitewash on yer face and wear tight clothes so as y' can't hardly breathe and ride in automobiles what's liable to blow up every minute. Much obliged, Mis' Chiggerson, fer your offer, but I reckon I'll stay here in Splinterville. Say, I can't stand here talkin' all day. I gotta git sump'm to eat some time. I'm so hungry I could eat up the hull kitchen, cook-stove, tom-cat and all. (*Exit at right.*)

JULIETTA. Won't you come in to supper, Mrs. Chiggerson?

MRS. C. B. Chiggerson-Boggs!

JULIETTA (*laughs*). I declare, I'm allers a-forgettin' the Buggs.

MRS. C. B. I'll go up to my room. You may send up a light collation.

JULIETTA. A what?

MRS. C. B. A lunch.

JULIETTA. Oh!

MRS. C. B. I may be down a little later if I'm not too fatigued. Georgie, don't eat too much supper. You're delicate, you know. (*Exit at left.*)

JULIETTA. Won't you come in now, Mr. Chiggerson?

GEORGE. What, with all those rough girls? No, thank you. Save me a nice little delicate lunch and you may serve it in my room.

JULIETTA. Say, I wonder if these folks thinks I'm running the Walled-off Castoria or what? (*Exit at right.*)

GEORGE *sinks back on the sofa and stretches legs out in front of him. Enter CHARMIAN CARTER from left. She comes down behind GEORGE and puts her hands over his eyes.*

GEORGE. Help, help, they've got me again. (*Falls on floor.*)

CHARMIAN. Don't be silly, George. Don't you know me?

GEORGE. Charmian! What are you doing here in Splinterville?

CHARMIAN. Don't swim around there on the floor like a fish. Get up and say you're glad to see me.

GEORGE (*rises*). I am, awfully. But how did you get here? (*Shakes hands with her.*)

CHARMIAN. I drove my car. Sixty miles in three hours. And I'm starving and so thirsty that my throat feels like a dusty road ten miles long. (*Sits on sofa and pulls GEORGE down beside her.*) Now sit down and take things easy. First tell me why we are here and then get me something to eat.

GEORGE. Why, we are here—

CHARMIAN (*sings to tune of Auld Lang Syne*). We're here because we're here, because we're here, because we're here! (*Speaks.*) Well, what's the big idea? Why *are* we here?

GEORGE. Just a little idea of mothah's, that's all. There's a young girl here who is worth heaps and heaps of money and mothah insists on taking her back to the city with us. And I'm to marry her.

CHARMIAN. What?

GEORGE. That's what mothah says, but of course I won't.

CHARMIAN. I should say not. You're going to marry me.

GEORGE (*gets on his knees beside her, first spreading his handkerchief carefully on the floor*). Charmian, you'll consent?

CHARMIAN. Well, not just at present, but sometime. When you've got money enough.

GEORGE. But I've got money enough now. See. (*Shows money in the bandana handkerchief.*) Mothah sold some property this evening and I have all the money.

CHARMIAN. Oh, I can't marry you now, Georgie. Why, I'd have to give up my position and everything. Get up like a good boy.

GEORGE (*sits on sofa*). But how did you know I was here?

CHARMIAN. The chauffeur told me. When you didn't come to take me to the movies last night I suspected something.

GEORGE. I couldn't get away. Mothah locked my door. You know every night after I go to bed I wait till she's asleep and then I get up and dress and slip out. But last night the door was locked.

CHARMIAN. Your chauffeur told me that you had come to Splinterville. I'm not working in the movies this week so I thought I'd take a little vacation and follow you. And now I learn that your mother is going to force you to marry another. (*Pretends to weep.*) Oh, Georgie, do you want to break my heart?

GEORGE. But I'm not going to marry her even if she is an heiress. I'm never going to marry anyone but you. Why I go to every movie show in town just hoping to see you in a picture.

CHARMIAN. Some day I'm going to be a star. I could be one now if only I had money enough to start a company. I'm sick of playing hired girls and maids and one of the crowd. I want to be a leading lady.

GEORGE. And so you shall, Charmian, just as soon as I get my money. We'll have plenty of money then.

CHARMIAN. But that's two whole years to wait. And I'll be old and fat and ugly by that time. (*Weeps.*) And you're

going to marry some high-toned heiress and forget all about your little Charmian.

GEORGE. Never! And besides she isn't high-toned at all, she's just a little ragged clodhopper from the poor-house.

CHARMIAN (*rises and crosses to table at right*). I wonder where everybody is. I'm nearly starved. They told me this was a boarding house.

GEORGE (*follows her*). Do you intend to stay here?

CHARMIAN. Of course. It's all right; your mother has never seen me.

GEORGE. Oh, that'll be awfully jolly. They're going to have a party or something tonight (*puts money on table and takes both her hands*) and you'll dance with me, won't you? (GEORGE and CHARMIAN *left of table*.)

Enter JULIETTA from right.

JULIETTA. Oh, excuse me. I didn't know you had company.

CHARMIAN. This gentleman was just telling me that I could get accommodations here for the night. You see I was driving my car to town and I had an accident. My name is Miss Carter.

JULIETTA. Why, of course you can. I got a spare room all ready. Mr. Chiggerson, shall I have your supper sent up?

GEORGE. Oh, no, don't bother. I'll eat in the dining-room with this lady.

CHARMIAN. With me? Well, I like that. I don't know you. We've never been introduced.

GEORGE (*astonished*). What's that?

CHARMIAN (*winks at him*). This gentleman is a perfect stranger to me.

JULIETTA. Oh! What did you say your name was?

CHARMIAN. Miss Carter. Miss Charmian Carter.

JULIETTA. Miss Carter, lemme make you 'quainted with Mr. Chiggerson.

GEORGE. Pleasure's all mine. (*Shakes hands with her*.)

Enter JUDY from right.

JUDY. Say, Miss Bean, the folks is done eatin', and what I wants to know is this—when do I get mine?

JULIETTA. Hush, Judy. Ain't you got no manners at all? Come with me. (*Exits at right. JUDY follows her. Turns and makes a "face" at GEORGE, then exits at right.*)

GEORGE. That's the heiress.

CHARMIAN. That little servant?

GEORGE. That's the one, but you see she doesn't know she's an heiress yet. Look at that coat and hat, will you? (*Holds them up.*) And that's the girl that mothah wants me to marry. (*Exits at right.*)

CHARMIAN. Indeed? I'll soon put a stop to that. (*Takes roll of money and puts it in the pocket of JUDY's coat.*) That's a little trick I learned in the movies. Now we'll see if this little clodhopper will marry my Georgie. I rather think that if she is branded as a thief that it will put her in her proper place, the county jail or the workhouse. (*Laughs scornfully and exits at right.*)

(*After a slight pause JULIETTA is heard speaking outside at right.*)

JULIETTA (*outside at right*). Now you folks all come into the parlor and we'll have some singing and music.

JULIETTA *enters from right, followed by OCEY and the boys and girls. SEPTIMUS, with a girl on either arm, comes last. He sits on sofa with the two girls. The others group around the stage.*

OCEY (*at center with JULIETTA*). I reckon I'm almost too full fer music or anything else. Ain't had sich a hearty supper since Thanksgiving Day, when I had to have the doctor. That last piece of pie in there jist about done me up.

JULIETTA. I should think it would. You et seven.

OCEY (*groans*). I know it and I hadn't orter 'a' did it. I feel fuller than a bedtick stuffed with hay.

JULIETTA. Now, folks, we're going to have some real citified music. In fact a reg'lar cabarett. I dunno what that is but I read it in the paper. First we'll have the or-ches-try.

(*Specialty introduced by all. Music on organ, drums, kazoos, combs, in fact on any kind of noise-producing instruments you can find. Children's toys may be used. Have a good organist and a violinist to carry the air and let the others chord in. Play some old-fashioned selection like "Auld Lang Syne."* JULIETTA beats time with a stick.)

OCEY. That was fine. I ain't heerd sech music since I went to the County Fair on the Fourth of July.

JULIETTA. Now, Mr. Green, won't you flavor us with a song?

SEPTIMUS. I don't know as it will be much of a flavor, but I'll do my best if the rest of you will help me.

(*SEPTIMUS sings up-to-date song with others surrounding him, keeping time or doing some simple dance steps. This number might be elaborated into a specialty with SEPTIMUS and the country girls if desired.*)

After specialty is over, JUDY, GEORGE and CHARMIAN enter from right.

OCEY (*at left on sofa*). Well, Judy, did you get enough to eat?

JUDY. I got sump'm, but I ain't never got enough in my whole life. You jest about finished the pie.

OCEY. Yes, and the pie jest about finished me. (*Groans.*) Oh, gosh, I wish I hadn't 'a' et them last three pieces.

JULIETTA. Now, Judy, won't you sing a song for the folks?

JUDY (*acts bashful*). Oh, I don't know nothin'.

JULIETTA. Yes, you do. Sing Polly-wolly-doodle and we'll all join in.

(*JUDY sings "Polly-wolly-doodle" and the others form a Virginia reel or quadrille and dance while she sings it. All clap, etc., keeping time to the music and all join in the choruses. JUDY dances in front with OCEY. Note: Any other lively song may be used.*)

GEORGE. I want to dance, too. I want to dance, too. (*Grabs CHARMIAN and dances wildly at right of center.*)

Enter MRS. C. B. from left.

MRS. C. B. Georgie, what do I see?

GEORGE. Why, nothing, mothah, nothing at all. (*All stop dancing.*)

MRS. C. B. I'm surprised, shocked. You dancing, with your lungs!

GEORGE. Beg pardon, mothah, I wasn't dancing with my lungs. I was dancing with my feet. (*All laugh.*)

MRS. C. B. (*loudly*). Silence! George, you must go to bed at once. It's long past your bedtime. Come with me. (*Leads him to left.*)

GEORGE. But, mothah, I want to enjoy myself.

MRS. C. B. Nonsense. We have to get up early in the morning and catch the first train back to the city. (*To JUDY.*) I telephoned to the poor-house and they said that you could go with me.

JUDY (*at center*). But I don't want to go. (*Turns to SEPTIMUS, who is on sofa.*) I don't have to go if I don't want to, do I, Mr. Green?

MRS. C. B. (*at center*). Of course you do. And I intend to love you and treat you just like I would my own child.

JUDY (*comes to her*). Do you mean it, Mrs. Chiggerson? Ain't you never goin' to beat me nor pinch me no more like you used to when you was matron of the poor-house.

MRS. C. B. Of course not. I'm sure I never was cruel to you, Judy. You were a bad little girl and I had to punish you for your own good. It hurt me almost as much as it did you.

JUDY. Maybe it did, but not in the same place.

MRS. C. B. It's settled, then. You must be at the station in time to leave with us on the morning train. (*Sees GEORGE talking to CHARMIAN at rear right of center.*) George!

GEORGE. Yes, mothah. (*Comes to her, JUDY goes to OCEY at right.*)

MRS. C. B. Tell your friends good night and come to your room. Have you got the money?

GEORGE. What money?

MRS. C. B. The roll of money in the bandana handkerchief. I gave it to you to keep it safe.

GEORGE. Why, yes, mothah, I laid it down here on the table.

MRS. C. B. How careless of you. (*Looks all around table.*) It isn't here. Miss Bean, the money isn't here.

JULIETTA (*comes down to table from rear left*). What money?

MRS. C. B. The money Ezry Beanbiler paid me for the house. Look around on the floor. (*All search for the money, OCEY on hands and knees.*)

CHARMIAN (*picks up JUDY's coat*). What's this?

JUDY. That's me white satin evening cloak.

CHARMIAN (*takes money from pocket*). And what is this?

MRS. C. B. My money!

JULIETTA. In Judy's pocket. Oh, Judy, I never suspected it of you. You always seemed a little wild but I never dreamed you was a thief.

ALL (*alarmed*). A thief? (*All standing.*)

JUDY (*at center*). I ain't no thief. I never put that money in my pocket. I didn't do it. (*Pause, looks at Mrs. C. B.*) Mrs. Chiggerson, you don't think I stole your money, do you?

MRS. C. B. I don't know.

JUDY. Ocey! (*Turns to him at right, he looks sadly down.*) Miss Bean! (*Turns to her at left center.*) Why don't none of you answer me? I didn't take it, I tell you. I didn't, I didn't! I never took a thing that wasn't mine in all my life. I ain't a thief. (*Crying.*) Oh, won't none of you believe me? Mr. Green!

SEPTIMUS (*beside JUDY at left of center*). Judy!

JUDY. Do you think I stole that money? Do you think I'm a thief?

SEPTIMUS. No, I don't. It's a plot. I don't know how the money got in your coat, little girl, but I'm willing to stake my last cent that you didn't put it there.

CHARMIAN (*between JUDY and Mrs. C. B. at right*). She did. I saw the money on the table and I saw her fumbling with her coat. Call an officer.

OCEY. I reckon I'm officer enough. I'm the deputy constable of this here district, but I'll be dog-goned if I think Judy stole that money.

GEORGE (*near the door at right*). Then how did it get in her pocket?

MRS. C. B. This settles everything. Judy, things look pretty black against you, but I won't have you arrested. I've got the money back and I won't say anything more about it on one condition.

JUDY. What's that?

MRS. C. B. That you accompany me to the city tomorrow. If you'll come with me I'll train you into the ways of righteousness—I'll make a lady of you.

CHARMIAN. A lady? She'd be a pretty looking lady. She's a thief and should be made to bear the punishment.

MRS. C. B. Silence! This is *my* affair. Judy, will you go with me?

JUDY (*at center*). Yes, I'll go. (*Looks steadily at CHARMIAN.*) But I ain't a goin' to let this thing drop. I'm going to find out who put that money in my coat and I'm going to find out why they did it. (*To CHARMIAN.*) You say I'm a thief, do you? Well, this ain't the end. (*Loudly.*) Some day I'm goin' to be able to prove who stole that money. I'll prove who's the thief—you or me!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Two months later.

SCENE: *A fancy room in the city home of MRS. CHIGGERSON-BOGGS. Entrances right and left. Handsome furniture, rugs, pictures, palms, etc. Fancy table and three chairs to match, down left. Piano with stool, down right near front of stage. As the curtain rises MRS. C. B. is playing the piano. GEORGE enters from left and starts to cross out at right, avoiding his mother. Just as he is about to leave at right she turns and sees him.*

MRS. C. B. Georgie!

GEORGE (*at right, near door*). Yes, mothah!

MRS. C. B. Come here. (*He comes toward her reluctantly.*) Where were you going?

GEORGE. Oh, I was just going to take a stroll in the park.

MRS. C. B. It is entirely too cool for you to be outdoors. You must take better care of your health.

GEORGE. Now, mothah, I'm not going to stay shut up in the house all day like an old woman. I've got to go out and get some fresh air.

MRS. C. B. Never mind, Georgie, I'll take you and Judy out with me in the limousine.

GEORGE. I want to walk.

MRS. C. B. But it will make you so fatigued and you're not well, you know. Where's Judy?

GEORGE. I don't know and I don't care.

MRS. C. B. Have you two been quarreling again?

GEORGE. Not again. It's the same old quarrel.

MRS. C. B. (*rises from piano stool*). George, this must stop at once. Judy has been with us here in the city for two months now and you are not making the most of your opportunities. I fear I have been too easy with you. You must propose to her at once.

GEORGE. But I don't want to propose to her.

MRS. C. B. Nonsense, you must do as I say. The little

money that Mr. Boggs left us is rapidly dwindling away. Something must be done at once.

GEORGE. So you've decided to do Judy?

MRS. C. B. I have decided that you two must be married as soon as possible. I received this letter from her father this morning. (*Shows letter.*) He is becoming impatient and wants me to bring her to him at once.

GEORGE. Very well, bring her. I don't object.

MRS. C. B. If she ever learns that her father is rich she'll never consent to marry you. You must act at once and then after the wedding we can all go to Texas on a honeymoon.

GEORGE. Now, mothah, I'm not going to marry her. I don't want to. I don't love her.

MRS. C. B. What difference does that make? You are entirely too young to know anything about love.

GEORGE. No, I'm not. Now, mothah, don't get me excited. You know I'm delicate and mustn't over-exert myself.

MRS. C. B. I know that we are on the verge of ruin and that your marriage to this girl is the only thing that can save us. Call her in and teach her that new dancing step. Then when I go out you can propose to her.

GEORGE. I don't want to. If you make me do this I'll sprinkle water on my head and catch the pneumonia, so I will.

(*JUDY is heard singing outside at left.*)

MRS. C. B. Hush, she is coming. Remember, George, I have reached the point where I can stand for no more nonsense. You two are to be married by Saturday.

Enter JUDY from left, singing.

JUDY. Oh, excuse me. I didn't know anybody was here. (*Starts to go out at left.*)

MRS. C. B. Just a moment, dear. There's no one here but the family. Don't go. Georgie has something very important to say to you.

GEORGE (*at right*). No, I haven't.

MRS. C. B. (*at center*). Yes, you have. (*Turns to JUDY, who is at left.*) He's such a bashful, timid boy.

JUDY (*at left*). I hadn't noticed it.

MRS. C. B. Speak up, Georgie.

GEORGE. I can't, mothah, when you're here. But I'll give Judy a dancing lesson if you want me to.

MRS. C. B. (*goes to piano and sits on stool*). Very well, son.

JUDY (*goes to GEORGE, speaks fiercely*). What did you want to say anything about a dancing lesson for? I don't want to dance.

MRS. C. B. But you must dance, Judy, if you expect to go to the ball tonight.

JUDY. Well, I reckon if I must, I must. Let her go.

MRS. C. B. Show her the new hesitation, George.

JUDY. Naw, I ain't goin' to do that hesitation thing. My feet gits all twisted up. I can dance a hoe-down or an old Virginny reel, but when it comes to the Bunny Hug and the Turkey Trot and the Kitchen Sink and them things, my feet jest naturally ain't got no ambition.

GEORGE. Oh, I can show you. Play slow, mothah. (MRS. C. B. *plays*.) Now, one, two three, one, two, three and hesitate.

JUDY (*dancing awkwardly with him*). Do I hesitate on both feet or only one?

GEORGE. Only one. Now a little glide. (*Glides with her*.)

JUDY (*breaks away*). You quit your tickling me!

GEORGE. Come on. (*They dance*.) Now faster, mothah. That's the way. Now around and around. (*Dances her around rapidly*.)

JUDY. I'm gittin' dizzy.

GEORGE. Get off my feet!

JUDY. Quit swingin' me, I'm losin' my balance. (*They twirl, she falls at center*.)

MRS. C. B. (*comes to her*). Why, Judy!

JUDY (*on floor*). That's enough. It's sufficiency, and when I say sufficiency, I'm through.

MRS. C. B. (*helps her up, JUDY limps*). Are you hurt?

JUDY. I'm pulverized. (*Sinks in chair at right*.)

MRS. C. B. Get her a glass of water, George. (*Exit GEORGE at left.*)

JUDY (*springs up*). I was jest playin' 'possum. I ain't hurt at all.

MRS. C. B. Judy, you must be more dignified. You're a young lady now.

JUDY. And two months ago I was diggin' potatoes at the poor-house.

MRS. C. B. You understand now why I brought you here to the city?

JUDY. No, I don't. You've been awful good to me and bought me a lot of clothes and things and gimme plenty of good eating and rid me around in your auty-mobile, but I dunno the why ner wherefore of it at all.

MRS. C. B. It's because my son George is in love with you. Madly, passionately in love. (*JUDY laughs.*) He is desperate.

JUDY. He don't look it. He ain't desperate enough to kill a full-grown Mizzoury muskeeter.

MRS. C. B. He wants to make you his wife.

JUDY. Who, me? What fur?

MRS. C. B. Because he loves you. The marriage, my dear, will take place on Saturday.

JUDY. But I don't wanner git married. I'm a-skeerd.

MRS. C. B. Nonsense. Georgie is gentleness personified. Just think, Judy, you'll never have to go back to the poor-house again, no more hard work or living on scraps, but fine clothes, a beautiful little home, servants, diamonds, an automobile—

JUDY. And Georgie! That's the nigger in the woodpile. I jest couldn't stand Georgie.

MRS. C. B. Oh, you'll get used to him.

Enter GEORGE from left.

GEORGE. Mothah, I forgot what it was you sent me after. And I couldn't find it anyway.

MRS. C. B. I am going out now, son, so never mind. I'll leave you two together. Judy has just consented to

become your wife. And happiness will reign supreme.
(*Exits at left.*)

JUDY. Nothing like it. Say, you don't want to marry me, do you?

GEORGE. Marry you? I should say not.

JUDY. Then you ain't madly, passionately, desperately in love with me at all?

GEORGE. Do I look it?

JUDY. No, I can't say as you do. Well, anyway, you needn't to worry, 'cause I wouldn't marry you if you was the last man on earth and had a million dollars.

Enter MRS. C. B. *from left wearing hat and furs.*

MRS. C. B. Billing and cooing, I see. Ah, love's young dream! Georgie is just like his dear papa twenty years ago. (*Crosses to right.*) Remember the wedding is to take place on Saturday.

Enter SEPTIMUS *from right.*

SEPTIMUS. Excuse me, but I'll only take a few minutes of your time.

MRS. C. B. How did you get in here?

SEPTIMUS. Pushed right past the servant and here I am. (*Rapidly.*) Madam, I am selling a wonderful book, a marvelous work of knowledge, four volumes bound in half calf, nearly three thousand pages, to be exact two thousand eight hundred and ninety-four, two hundred and twelve illustrations and thirty-two hand-colored plates. Here is a prospectus. (*Shows book.*)

MRS. C. B. George, have the servants throw this impudent fellow in the streets. Or better still, do it yourself.

SEPTIMUS (*crosses to* GEORGE). Yes, George, do it yourself. Let George do it.

MRS. C. B. I'll speak to the butler. (*At door right.*) Remember, children, the wedding is to be on Saturday. I'll be back in half an hour, so you'd better improve your golden opportunity. (*Exits at right.*)

GEORGE. Sir, you'd better get out. We don't want to buy your book. Mothah's got a book.

SEPTIMUS. That was all a bluff. I didn't expect to sell a book here.

JUDY. No, you see, George, this here gent is a friend of mine.

GEORGE. Why, I recognize him now. It's the impudent fellow we saw in Splinterville.

SEPTIMUS (*at center*). Yours truly. (*Bows.*) That's me.

GEORGE. But you'd better leave at once. Mothah wouldn't approve of your being here at all.

SEPTIMUS. I got a little message for you.

GEORGE. I don't want any of your messages. You get out!

SEPTIMUS. But this little message is from Charmian.

GEORGE (*starts*). Charmian?

SEPTIMUS. She's waiting for you at the corner drug store.

GEORGE. She is?

SEPTIMUS. And she's in an awful temper. You'd better take a little tip from Septimus and hurry over there before she boils over.

GEORGE. Perhaps you are right.

JUDY (*comes from rear down between the two men*). Here, here, George Chiggerson, if you're going to marry me on Saturday you'd better not be galavantin' 'round to no corner drug stores. I won't have it.

GEORGE. But I'm not going to marry you, you know. I'm going to marry Charmian.

JUDY. Oh, Georgie, do you want to break my innocent, little, trusting heart? (*Sobs loudly.*)

GEORGE. Now, Judy—(*starts to embrace her*).

SEPTIMUS (*pulls him to door at right*). Here, here, you hurry up. Charmian don't like to be kept waiting. Hurry up!

GEORGE. But you'd better come with me.

JUDY. Oh, I'll take care of *him*!

SEPTIMUS. Yes, she'll take care of me. Now you hurry over to the drug store and buy a nice chocolate nut sundae, and don't forget the nut.

GEORGE (*at door right*). But, I say—

SEPTIMUS. Oh, say it to Charmian, say it to Charmian!
(*Pushes him out at right.*)

JUDY (*laughs*). That's a nice way to treat my future husband.

SEPTIMUS. Look at me close.

JUDY. What for?

SEPTIMUS (*bows*). And you will behold your future husband.

JUDY. But Mrs. Boggs says that I have to marry Georgie on Saturday.

SEPTIMUS. Then Mrs. Boggs has made a slight mistake. She's only after your money.

JUDY (*at left*). My money? I ain't got no money.

SEPTIMUS. You know that letter you showed me?

JUDY. The one I found in Mrs. Boggs's room?

SEPTIMUS. Yes. That letter was from your father.

JUDY. That's what you told me, but where is he?

SEPTIMUS. He's down in Texas and I sent him a telegram to come here at once. I told him that the old lady was trying to force you to marry her son.

JUDY. Oh, what did he say?

SEPTIMUS. He never answered. Judy, there's a dark and gruesome mystery connected with this letter. If I don't hear from your dad in a day or two I'm going to turn detective and go down to Texas after him.

JUDY. How would you know him?

SEPTIMUS. That letter you swiped from old lady Boggs had his address on it. St. Luke's Hospital, San Antonio, Texas. Did you put the letter back in her box?

JUDY. Sure, I did.

SEPTIMUS. Then she doesn't suspect us. Gee, it's just like a detective story. You're a lost heiress and I'm the bold detective on the trail of the villains.

JUDY (*very excited*). Yes, yes—and what'll you do when you catch 'em?

SEPTIMUS. Why, claim my reward, of course.

JUDY. What reward?

SEPTIMUS. The hand of the missing heiress. That's the

way detectives always do. It tells all about it in the second volume of my wonderful book.

JUDY. But how do you know the missing heiress will give you her hand?

SEPTIMUS (*throws out his chest and struts to right*). Oh, they always do.

JUDY (*follows him angrily*). Oh, they do, do they?

SEPTIMUS. Sure, there ain't anyone can resist a detective.

JUDY. Well, here's one who don't.

SEPTIMUS. Now, Judy, I—

JUDY. Don't you "Judy" me! (*Slaps her hands in his face, forcing him to step backward, he sits on the keys of the piano with a bang and then slips to the floor.*)

SEPTIMUS. Stung!

JUDY (*laughing*). The Downfall of the Detective. (*Sits at table at left.*)

SEPTIMUS (*sits on piano stool*). So this is the end, is it?

JUDY. The end of what? The piano?

SEPTIMUS. No, the end of our little romance.

JUDY. I never knew we had a little romance.

SEPTIMUS. Then I must tell you about it. (*Duet may be introduced here, at finish they resume seats, he on stool, she at table.*) Judy, come over here.

JUDY (*shakes her head and speaks with closed lips, meaning "no"*). Um-um!

SEPTIMUS. Aw, come on.

JUDY (*bashfully rubs toe on carpet, head down*). Um-um!

SEPTIMUS. But I want to talk to you.

JUDY. Go as fur as you like. I ain't a henderin' you. (*Bashful business continues.*)

SEPTIMUS. I have something very particular to say to you.

JUDY (*looks up, speaks quickly*). What is it? (*Rises.*)

SEPTIMUS. I can't say it when you're away over there. I've got to illustrate it with gestures. (*Pantomimes hugging her.*)

JUDY (*sliding a step toward him*). Honest?

SEPTIMUS. Honest Injun.

JUDY (*sliding another step*). Is it awfully particular?

SEPTIMUS (*with closed lips, meaning "yes"*). Um-um.

JUDY (*sits beside him on piano stool*). Well, if it's awfully particular that's different.

SEPTIMUS. Say, Judy (*head down, acts bashful, takes out handkerchief and twists it*). Say, Judy—

JUDY. Well, go on and say it.

SEPTIMUS. Say, did Georgie Chiggeron ever make love to you?

JUDY. He tried it, but I told him just where he could get off at.

SEPTIMUS. I'll bet you don't know what love is, do you?

JUDY (*scornfully*). Humph, there ain't a girl livin' who dunno what love is.

SEPTIMUS. Well, what is it?

JUDY. What is it? (*Pauses.*) Why, it is—(*pauses*). It's—(*acts bashful, twisting dress*). Aw, you go on! I ain't goin' to tell you what it is. Don't you know? A great big man like you?

SEPTIMUS (*sighs*). I got a kind of an idea. You see it's when a girl and a boy (*hesitates*)—it's when they—when they—(*pauses*).

JUDY. I know. He looks at her and sighs, and then she looks at him and sighs. Then they both sighs and act like a couple of roosters out in a rainstorm and nary one of 'em got sense enough to put up a umbrell. That's love.

SEPTIMUS. You don't know anything about it. It isn't that way at all. In fact it is altogether different.

JUDY. You don't say so!

SEPTIMUS. I do say so. You see when a fellow is in love everything looks rosy and bright!

JUDY (*mocking him*). And when a fellow gets married, good-night, good-night!

SEPTIMUS. Now I know what I'm talking about.

JUDY. You don't say so!

SEPTIMUS. Where did you get that don't say so? I know all the symptoms of love. In fact, I *am* in love.

JUDY. You don't—

SEPTIMUS (*interrupts*). Say so! Cut that out, Judy. How can a fellow be romantic when you're interrupting all the time. Now, I have known you for quite a long time and—

JUDY (*starts to speak, SEPTIMUS joins in, they both speak together*). You don't say so!

SEPTIMUS. I had an aunt once who always said, "You don't say so!" and she died.

JUDY. You don't—(*puts her hand over her mouth*).

SEPTIMUS. Yes, she said it so much that it was second nature to her. Now my poor old aunt is dead.

JUDY. Is it the same aunt?

SEPTIMUS. What do you mean same aunt?

JUDY. I mean the one who died a little while ago.

SEPTIMUS. I only had one aunt.

JUDY. Oh, it was the same one. Then she died twice.

SEPTIMUS. No, she didn't. She was a good old lady and one day she died and—

JUDY. That makes three times she died. Say, Septimus, your old aunt was an awful hand to die, wasn't she?

SEPTIMUS. Judy, I am going away.

JUDY. Where?

SEPTIMUS. I told you that I thought I'd go to Texas and look for your father. So, I'm going away. (*Pauses, looks at her.*) You don't care, do you?

JUDY (*sadly, nods her head*). It'll be kinder lonesome like without you.

SEPTIMUS. Will you miss me?

JUDY. I reckon I will. You see a person would miss a boil on their nose if they'd had it a long time. (*Spoken sadly and seriously.*)

SEPTIMUS (*rises indignantly*). Then this is the end?

JUDY (*pulls him back on sofa*). Sit down, Septimus, sit down. Your talk is just beginning to get interesting.

SEPTIMUS. It will be necessary for me to go away, Judy. You see we can't always be together.

JUDY. That's right, we can't.

SEPTIMUS. But why not?

JUDY. Because we are two. Me and you makes two.

SEPTIMUS. But there's a way for me and you to be made one.

JUDY. How about you and Liza Lemon out in Splinterville?

SEPTIMUS. Oh, that's all off.

JUDY. Honest Injun?

SEPTIMUS. Nothing could be more offer. Judy, you're the only girl in the whole world for me. I (*pauses, coughs, chokes*)—I—

JUDY (*after a pause*). Well, go on, go on. Don't hesitate now. This ain't no time fer hesitation.

SEPTIMUS. My heart is full, but I can't find words.

JUDY. Aw, we don't need no words.

SEPTIMUS (*puts arm about her waist*). Judy!

Enter OCEY and JULIETTA arm in arm from right.

OCEY. Great day in the morning!

JULIETTA. Excuse us, we didn't know as how you was busy.

(*JUDY and SEPTIMUS jump up, she runs to left, he gets behind the piano. OCEY and JULIETTA come down C.*)

JUDY. It's Ocey Gump and Miss Julietta Bean!

JULIETTA. Judy Elliott, come here and kiss me. I'm tickled most to death to see you. (*Hugs and kisses her.*)

JUDY. What on earth are you doing here in the city? Looking so fine, too.

JULIETTA (*whirls slowly around showing off costume*). How do you like my costoom?

JUDY. It's lovely. And Ocey looks so nice, too. (*Shakes hands with him, he starts to kiss her.*)

JULIETTA. Ocey!

OCEY. Yes, honey bunch.

JUDY. Now what are you two doing here in town?

OCEY. Ask her. (*Acts bashfully, kicking foot on carpet, looking at it, twisting body around.*)

JUDY. Well, Miss Julietta? You two ain't been a gettin'—(*pauses*).

JULIETTA. Yep, we've been and gone and done it. Mar-

ried at Splinterville yesterday afternoon and here we be in the city on our tower.

JUDY. On your what?

OCEY (*at right*). Wedding tower. And we're going to live here in the city from now and henceforth forever.

JULIETTA. What became of that man you was talking to so confidential like when we come in?

JUDY (*at C.*). That was Mr. Green. (*Looks around.*) Why, where is he?

SEPTIMUS (*comes from behind piano*). Here I am. Howdy, Mr. Gump. I just heard you got married. Congratulate you! Wish you many happy returns. (*Shakes hands with him at right.*)

JULIETTA (*at left*). Many happy returns of getting married? Well, I like that.

SEPTIMUS (*goes to her*). My old friend, Miss Bean, I wish you well. (*Starts to kiss her.*)

OCEY. Hold on there, Septimus. Back up, back up! She ain't Miss Bean no longer. She's Mrs. Ocey Epizootic Gump, Esquire, Splinterville, Hick'ry County, State of Mizoury.

JUDY (*at center*). My, I'm so glad to see you. Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs has gone out in her car, but she'll be back soon.

JULIETTA. Oh, we jest dropped in. Ocey's uncle lives here in town and he's goin' to git Ocey a job on the police force. Won't he make a lovely policeman?

OCEY. You bet I will. Been in town purt' nigh five hours and I'm city broke already.

JUDY. I'll speak to the cook and have a little lunch prepared for you.

OCEY. That's the talk.

JULIETTA. Ocey Gump, if you eat any more you'll bust. That man hain't done nothin' but eat since we was married yesterday. I never seen sich a capacity.

OCEY. All this yere noise and crowd of city folks makes me as hungry as a wood tick in January. I never heerd sich a racket in all my born days.

JULIETTA. When we got off'n the keers we was skeerd plum stiff at all them people at the deepott. Ocey thought there was a parade or sump'm.

OCEY. Then we went to the theater. I snum, I never saw nuthin' like that at Splinterville.

JULIETTA. Ocey Gump, you hush up. That theater wasn't respectable and you know it. It was them coca-cola dancers from Honoluly.

OCEY. You orter seen 'em jump, Septimus. Never seen nothin' like it afore. Wriggled worsen'n a snake on a fishin' hook. One of 'em like to skeerd Julietta into fits, jumpin' around thiserway. (*Imitates humming song.*)

JULIETTA. Ocey! (*She crosses to him and seizes his shoulders, forces him down roughly in chair at right.*) I never was so shocked in my life. You all mustn't pay no attention to his doings. When a man's on his honeymoon there ain't no tellin' what fool things he'll do. He actually spent thirty cents fer dinner. And then bought a nickel's worth of peanuts besides. Ain't that scand'lous?

SEPTIMUS. Now that you intend to live in the city the first thing you want to start housekeeping with is a copy of my beautiful book. Here is the prospectus. Four volumes bound in half calf, nearly three thousand pages—

OCEY. Hold on there, Mr. Septimus Green. You sold me one of them books last spring. And my wife says it ain't proper fer me to read it.

JULIETTA. Now, Ocey—

SEPTIMUS. Why it's the most proper book on record. The physiology section alone is worth the price of the book.

OCEY. That's jest the part she won't lemme read. And I allers like to refer to that part when I get the earache er chilblains er mumps er sump'm.

JUDY. Have you picked out a house yet, Mrs. Gump?

JULIETTA (*seated near her*). No, we're goin' to stay at Ocey's uncle's fer a spell, then maybe I'll open a boarding-house. Don't you think Ocey'll make a perfectly lovely policeman?

SEPTIMUS. Sure, he will. I'll bet no crook could pull the wool over Ocey's eyes.

OCEY (*struts around*). You bet they couldn't.

JULIETTA. We've got to meet his uncle at five o'clock. What time is it now, sugar?

OCEY (*looks for his watch in watch-pocket but finds it gone, the empty chain is hanging to his vest*). My watch! Heavens to Betsy, I done been robbed!

JULIETTA (*hurries to him*). Robbed?

OCEY. The old silver watch my Grandfather Doozenberry left to me in his will. That there watch has been in our family purt' nigh onto ninety years.

JULIETTA. And now it's gone.

JUDY. Who do you reckon stole it, Ocey?

JULIETTA. I know who it was. It was that gal you set beside in the street-car. I seen her looking at you, and you winked at her.

OCEY. No, I didn't, rosebud.

JULIETTA. Yes, you did!

OCEY. Well, not very much—jist a little blink, like that. (*Imitates.*)

JULIETTA. Yes, and when you did your little blink like that (*imitates*), she stole your watch.

JUDY (*looks at wrist watch*). It's five minutes to five.

JULIETTA (*jumps up and grabs OCEY*). Five minutes to five? We ain't got a minute to lose. He said he'd meet you at the Postoffice at five o'clock sharp. Come on. (*Pulls OCEY to door at right.*)

JUDY. Oh, don't go so soon. You stay a while, Miss Julietta.

OCEY. Yes, Julietta, you stay a while.

JULIETTA. Stay, hey? Me? Well, I guess not. Think I want you to go galavantin' all around town blinkin' and winkin' at every gal you meet. They'd steal the gold out of your front teeth. I'm your lawful wedded wife linked to you in the holy wedlocks of matrimony, and where you go, I go! Come on! (*Jerks him out at right.*)

JUDY (*follows them*). Be sure and call me up over the phone and come again.

JULIETTA (*outside*). All right.

(JUDY turns and bumps into SEPTIMUS, who is close behind her.)

JUDY (*indignantly*). Well, I like that.

SEPTIMUS. I kind of thought you did. Sit down, Judy, I still have something to tell you.

JUDY. I won't! (*Sits down immediately.*)

SEPTIMUS. Neither will I. (*Sits beside her, takes her hand.*)

JUDY. Honest, Sep, are you going down to Texas?

SEPTIMUS. You bet I am. If I don't hear from your dad right away, I'll hit the trail.

JUDY. And you are doing all this for me?

SEPTIMUS. I am doing it for the little girl I love. (*Starts to put arm around her.*)

Enter Mrs. C. B. from right.

JUDY. Say, this house is just full of interruptions.

MRS. C. B. Judy Elliott, you ungrateful child, go to your room. (*Turns to SEPTIMUS, who is at right.*) As for this tramp, I will have the servants throw him into the street.

JUDY (*at left*). He ain't a tramp. He's a perfect gentleman.

SEPTIMUS (*at right, bows to Mrs. C. B., who is at center*). And his name is Green.

MRS. C. B. (*faces him angrily*). Will you leave my house at once or shall I call for the police?

SEPTIMUS. I don't think I'd do that, Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs, because if you do I might tell them what I know about you.

MRS. C. B. Insolent! You know nothing about me!

SEPTIMUS (*insinuatingly*). And what I know about the father of Judy Elliott.

MRS. C. B. (*starts back a step, recovers herself and asks in frightened voice*). What—what do you mean?

SEPTIMUS. You know what I mean, madam. I mean the man who is in the St. Luke Hospital at San Antonio,

Texas. That's all. Good afternoon. (*Bows and exits calmly at right.*)

MRS. C. B. Judy, who was that man?

JUDY. Name's Green. He's a book agent.

MRS. C. B. And what has he been telling you?

JUDY. Oh, he told me lots of things.

MRS. C. B. You mustn't believe a word he said. I'll have to have a long talk with you. I don't intend to put this wedding off any longer.

JUDY. What wedding?

MRS. C. B. Your wedding to my son. It must take place tomorrow morning. Delays are dangerous.

JUDY. But I ain't goin' to marry him.

MRS. C. B. Oh, yes, you are. (*Close to her.*) He loves you and I will arrange for the wedding tomorrow. (*Grasps her wrist, both facing front.*) If you dare to disobey me—

JUDY. But he doesn't want to marry me.

MRS. C. B. Leave that to me. As for you—well, I know a justice who will perform the ceremony if we have to take you there by force. Tell George to drive the car into the garage, it is beginning to rain. Then come up to my room. (*Crosses to door at left, speak next line to audience.*) I feel that danger threatens and I must work tonight. (*Exits at left.*)

JUDY. I won't marry George Chiggerson, no matter what she says. I'll run away and be an old maid first. I'd rather go back to the poor-house.

Enter GEORGE from right.

GEORGE. Where's mothah?

JUDY. Up in her room.

GEORGE (*speaks at door to CHARMIAN, who is outside*). Then the coast is clear. You can come in.

Enter CHARMIAN from left.

JUDY. Your mother said to put the car in the garage. It's beginning to rain.

GEORGE. I rather think we'll need the car, won't we, Charmian?

CHARMIAN. Yes, George, we'll need the car.

JUDY. Oh, George, there was an awful row. The old lady came in and caught Sep Green here and fired him out. Then she had an awful duck-fit and said that you and I were to be married the first thing in the morning.

GEORGE. Oh, I guess you don't need to worry about that.

JUDY (*at center*). She said she knew a man who'd marry us whether we wanted to get married or not.

GEORGE (*at right with CHARMIAN*). She can't do that, can she, Charmian?

CHARMIAN. I should say not. (*Goes toward JUDY.*) And do you know why? 'Cause me and George are going to be married tonight.

JUDY (*astonished*). Tonight?

CHARMIAN. That's the program. Do you think I'm going to allow you to marry the only man I ever loved? No, never! It's woman against woman in a fight for love—and I'm going to win.

JUDY. Go ahead and win. You got my consent.

GEORGE. But I've got to have some money, Judy. To get a license and supper and things. I haven't got a cent.

CHARMIAN. Nor I.

JUDY. Well, you ain't got nothin' on me. I'm busted, too.

GEORGE. But you can borrow some from mothah.

CHARMIAN. Of course you can. Tell her that you need a little to buy some things for the wedding tomorrow. Make her think you're crazy to marry Georgie and she'll come across. Just use a little soft soap.

GEORGE. Please, Judy, do this for us. We'll get married and come home and mothah will forgive us and then everything will be all right.

JUDY. George, I don't think you know your mother very well. (*Sits at left.*)

MRS. C. B. (*outside at left*). Judy, Judy!

JUDY. She's coming. You hide in the hall and I'll see what I can do. How much do you want?

GEORGE. Ten will be enough.

CHARMIAN. I should say not. We'll need at least fifty. Remember you've got to buy me a wedding supper.

MRS. C. B. Judy, where are you?

JUDY. Hurry! She's coming. (GEORGE and CHARMIAN go out at right.)

Enter MRS. C. B. *from left.*

MRS. C. B. Judy! I've been calling you for half an hour.

JUDY (*jumps up*). Oh, I must have been asleep.

MRS. C. B. (*at left*). Have you been thinking over what I told you?

JUDY (*at right*). Yes'm, I have.

MRS. C. B. Well? (*Pause, JUDY pays no attention.*) Well!!

JUDY. Yes, I'm pretty well, thank you.

MRS. C. B. What is your decision? Are you going to marry my son tomorrow?

JUDY. Maybe he won't want me.

MRS. C. B. (*grimly*). Oh, I'll answer for that.

JUDY. Well, if he wants me to marry him tomorrow, I reckon I will.

MRS. C. B. (*delighted, goes to her*). You will? Judy! (*Embraces her, JUDY grimaces at audience unseen by MRS. C. B.*) You make me the happiest of women.

JUDY. Say, Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs, will you do me a favor?

MRS. C. B. Why, certainly, Judy. What is it?

JUDY. I want to borrow a little money. About sixty dollars.

MRS. C. B. What for?

JUDY. It's to buy something for some friends of mine.

MRS. C. B. Very well. You may have it in the morning.

JUDY (*goes to her*). Oh, that'll be too late. I gotta have it tonight.

MRS. C. B. A parting present, I suppose, before you marry my son.

JUDY. Yes'm, that's it.

MRS. C. B. (*opens purse*). Would you rather have the cash or a check.

JUDY. Oh, gimme the cash, gimme the cash.

MRS. C. B. Very well. Three twenties. There you are.

JUDY. Oh, much obliged. (*Takes money.*)

MRS. C. B. Come to my room and we'll make preparations for the wedding. Oh, listen to that rain!

JUDY. Yes'm, it's comin' down sump'm fierce.

MRS. C. B. Come upstairs and I'll have the butler light a fire. (*Exit left.*)

JUDY (*runs to door R.*). Georgie!

GEORGE *appears at door right.*

GEORGE. Did you get it?

JUDY. Did I? Does a duck swim? There's sixty dollars.

GEORGE. Oh, much obliged. You're an awfully good little pal, you are, really.

Enter CHARMIAN from right.

CHARMIAN. Did she get the money?

GEORGE (*shows it*). Certainly. Here it is.

CHARMIAN (*grasps it*). Give it here. I'm the treasurer of this stock company. Now hurry, it's raining cats and dogs.

GEORGE. Where's my umbrella, Judy?

JUDY. In the hall.

GEORGE. We'll grab mothah's car and be married in half an hour.

CHARMIAN. Then we'll be back, Judy, and take you and the old lady out for a swell feed. That'll soothe her wounded feelings. Come on, George! (*Takes his arm and they go out at right.*)

JUDY. Well, that lets me out! My, but won't Mrs. Chigger-son-Boggs have a fit when she learns that her little Georgie has married an actress? I'll bet when I get married I ain't goin' to run away in a rain-storm. Not me. I want a veil and a long-tailed white satin dress trimmed with red ribbons and bridesmaids and a six-story cake and the hull fixing. And I'll sashay down the aisle (*at front center. SEPTIMUS enters from right and watches her unobserved*) and the preacher'll say (*deep voice*) "Judy, do you take this yere man to be your lawful wedded husband and

will you make him love, honor and obey you?" And I'll say, "I will!" And he'll say, "Mister, do you take this yere woman to be your lawful wedded wife—"

SEPTIMUS (*comes down to her*). And I'll say, "I will!"

JUDY. Why, Sep Green, you won't neither. How do you know you'll be there at all?

SEPTIMUS. You bet I'll be there, Judy. Who ever heard of a wedding without the bridegroom?

JUDY. It seems to me you're taking a whole lot fer granted.

SEPTIMUS. Sure I am. I'm taking you.

JUDY. You'd better get out. If the old lady sees you she'll get the police. My, how you sassed her!

SEPTIMUS. Judy, I've heard from your father.

JUDY. You have? What did he say? Is he my honest, sure-enough father? Where is he? Who is he? Is he rich?

SEPTIMUS. Hold on. One question at a time. He's at the hospital in San Antonio and he wants me to come and see him.

JUDY. Wants *you* to come? Why don't he want me?

SEPTIMUS. That's the mystery. The telegram said for me to come at once and to come alone. But I hate to leave you here.

JUDY. Oh, don't worry about me. I can take care of myself. Look at that. (*Doubles up right arm, showing muscle, slaps it with left.*)

SEPTIMUS. But the old lady is going to force you to marry Georgie.

JUDY. I should say not! Georgie's married already. To Charmian Carter.

SEPTIMUS. He is?

JUDY. Tonight. Ain't it exciting? Just like a story-book.

SEPTIMUS. I've got to catch the Texas Limited in twenty minutes. The telegram told me to come at once.

JUDY. Then you'd better hurry.

SEPTIMUS (*close to her*). Aren't you going to tell me good-bye?

JUDY (*indifferently*). Sure. Good-bye.

SEPTIMUS. Oh, I didn't mean that way.

Enter OCEY from right.

OCEY. Say, Judy, have you seen anything of my umbrella? I reckon it's done lost and Julietta told me to come back yere and see if it was here.

JUDY. No, you didn't have an umbrella when you were here.

OCEY. Jumping grasshoppers and Kansas tadpoles! I'll bet a copper cent somebody's stole it off'n me. I never see sich a place as the city. They'd steal the eye-teeth right out'n yer head. That was a good umbrella, too. And I sure do need it. It's raining bullfrogs, hyenas and snake-feeders.

SEPTIMUS. Wait a minute, Ocey, and you can ride in my taxi.

OCEY. I kin? Gosh, I'll wait all night.

SEPTIMUS. Just wait out in the hall.

OCEY. Oh, I'd jest as soon wait here. I ain't partic'ler.

SEPTIMUS. No, but I am. You wait in the hall.

OCEY. Jest as you say, jest as you say. (*Exit right.*)

SEPTIMUS (*embraces JUDY*). Judy, I am going away—

JUDY. Seems like you don't do nothin' else but go away. Honest, it takes you longer to say good-bye than any man I ever saw.

SEPTIMUS. Will you miss me, Judy? (*Arm around her.*)

Enter MRS. C. B. from left.

MRS. C. B. Release that girl! Now, leave my house. I'm going to telephone for the police.

SEPTIMUS. There's no need for that. I'm going. Good-bye, Judy. I'll write to you every day. (*At door right.*) Ocey!

JUDY. Good-bye, Sep. I'll remember what you said.

SEPTIMUS. I wonder what became of Ocey? Good-bye. (*Exit right with JUDY.*)

MRS. C. B. Judy! Judy Elliott, you come back here! (*Starts to go out at right when JUDY re-enters.*)

JUDY. Here I am.

MRS. C. B. What does this mean? You seem to forget that you are to marry my son the first thing in the morning.

JUDY. I ain't forgot nothin'. I said I'd marry him if he wanted me to. But I know plum well he ain't a goin' to want me.

MRS. C. B. My son never disobeys his mother. If I tell him to marry you, he'll do it.

JUDY. I'll bet a hundred dollars and sixteen cents he don't. (*Wags head during this speech, nod emphatically on the last word.*)

MRS. C. B. What do you mean? Where is he? Let him speak for himself. George!

JUDY. He ain't here. He's gone out.

MRS. C. B. Gone out in all this storm with his weak heart?

JUDY. Not with his weak heart, with his sweetheart.

MRS. C. B. What do you mean by his sweetheart? What are you concealing from me? Who is with him? Where is he?

Enter GEORGE and CHARMIAN from right.

GEORGE. Here he is, mothah. Your little Georgie's right here.

CHARMIAN (*at right front with GEORGE*). And little Georgie's little wife is right here, too.

MRS. C. B. (*at left*). His wife? George Chiggerson, what does this person mean? Speak, I command you! Who is she?

GEORGE. Now, mothah, don't get excited—(*starts toward her*).

MRS. C. B. (*springs toward him and grasps his wrist*). Who is she?

GEORGE. My wife. We've just been married by the minister.

MRS. C. B. (*crosses to CHARMIAN at right, hisses at her*). Is this true?

CHARMIAN. Yes, it's true. And here's the marriage license.

(MRS. C. B. *stands at right of center*, CHARMIAN *at right*, GEORGE *at center and* JUDY *at rear left*.)

MRS. C. B. I'll have the marriage annulled. He's going to marry Judy Elliott in the morning.

CHARMIAN. I guess not. George Chiggerson is of legal age and so am I, and that annulment thing won't work, see!

MRS. C. B. And little Judy standing there with a breaking heart.

CHARMIAN. I guess her heart ain't broke much. She helped us get married.

MRS. C. B. Helped you?

GEORGE. Yes, mothah, she furnished the money. Sixty dollars.

MRS. C. B. (*to audience*). The money she borrowed from me. (*Crosses to JUDY at left, GEORGE crosses to CHARMIAN.*) So you helped them, did you?

JUDY (*faces her bravely*). Yes, I did.

MRS. C. B. This is your gratitude, is it?

JUDY. You wanted him to marry me for my money, that's all. You were just trying to get my father's money.

MRS. C. B. What!

JUDY. I read one of the letters from him.

MRS. C. B. Oh, you did! Then I wash my hands of you. I'm done with you. Get out. Leave my house.

JUDY. Tomorrow?

MRS. C. B. No. This very night.

JUDY. But it's raining. I can't go out. I don't know where to go.

MRS. C. B. I don't care where you go. Go back to the poor-house.

JUDY. I haven't any money. I'm all alone here. Alone in the big city. (*Sobs.*)

MRS. C. B. Go to that man Green.

JUDY. He's gone away. Oh, Mrs. Boggs, don't turn me out!

GEORGE. Mothah, don't turn her out in the storm. That's awful. (*Goes to left.*)

MRS. C. B. I will! I'll show you who's the mistress of this house. (*Exit left.*)

JUDY (*sobbing*). Oh, she'll do it, and I ain't got no place to go. I dunno what to do. (*At right of center, CHARMIAN crosses to GEORGE.*)

Enter MRS. C. B. *with* JUDY's hat, coat and satchel.

MRS. C. B. There's what belongs to you. Now, go I've done with you forever! Go! (*Shoves her to door.*)

JUDY. Oh, where'll I go? What'll I do? I don't know no one. I ain't got no friends here.

Enter OCEY *from right.*

OCEY. Yes, ye have. You got one. I'm your friend.

OTHERS. You!

OCEY. Yep, little gal, you jest come with me. You're a little clodhopper, and so am I, and so is Julietta, and we'll all sink er swim together, by heck! I'll take keer of you.

(*OCEY and JUDY at door right, MRS. C. B. at center, GEORGE and CHARMIAN at left.*)

SLOW CURTAIN.

ACT III.

Three weeks later, a day in July.

SCENE: *The same as Act II. CHARMIAN discovered seated at left front knitting a sweater. Enter GEORGE from right.*

CHARMIAN. You're back early. Did you have any luck?

GEORGE. No; it's the same old story. I'm not strong enough for the job. I've gone out every day for three weeks, ever since we were married, looking for work, but the whole city seems against me. (*Sinks on piano stool, buries face in his hands.*) Everyone is against me.

CHARMIAN (*crosses to him and puts hand on his shoulder*). No, George, your wife is with you.

GEORGE (*taking her hand affectionately*). Charmian, you're a regular little brick. That's what you are. After

Judy left we found out we hadn't anything at all. You had married a beggar. But you've been a wonder—never a word of complaint, always happy and cheerful. I wish mothah would be more like you.

CHARMIAN (*sits beside him on piano stool*). You still have that nine hundred dollars.

GEORGE. Yes, but I'll soon have to spend it for rent and food.

CHARMIAN. If we could only persuade your mother to allow us to buy that little movie picture-house out on the north side. I'm sure we could make it go. You could run the machine and I could sell the tickets.

GEORGE. And sometimes we could put on a little song between the reels. Like this. (*Specialty introduced.*)

CHARMIAN. But it's all a dream. Mother would never consent in the world.

GEORGE. Then we'll all go to the poor-house together. You never should have married me, Charmian. You had plenty of other chances, you know. Men who had good positions, men with money, men with brains.

CHARMIAN. Yes. I know.

GEORGE. And yet you chose me. Why?

CHARMIAN. Because you were the man I wanted. You were my man! And I was afraid you were going to marry Judy.

GEORGE. Poor little Judy. I wonder if she went back to the poor-house.

CHARMIAN. That country fellow who rescued her so heroically—what became of him?

GEORGE. I never saw him since that night. I suppose he's gone back to the fascinations of Splinterville.

Enter MRS. C. B. from left.

MRS. C. B. Charmian, George, I have some important news.

GEORGE. Mothah, what is it?

CHARMIAN. Is it good news?

MRS. C. B. That remains to be seen. Judy Elliott's father is here in town.

GEORGE (*at right with* CHARMIAN). He is? How do you know?

MRS. C. B. (*at left of center*). He just called me up on the phone. He's coming here at once.

CHARMIAN. Coming here? What for?

MRS. C. B. To see his daughter.

GEORGE. But, mothah, she isn't here, you know.

MRS. C. B. Oh, yes, she is.

CHARMIAN. Has she come back?

MRS. C. B. Now listen to me, you two. This old man, her father, is an invalid. He intends to return to Texas tonight. He said that all he wanted was to see his daughter and make sure that she is happy. He is coming here to see her.

GEORGE. But she isn't here.

MRS. C. B. (*dramatically points to* CHARMIAN). She is here. There is Judy Elliott!

GEORGE (*looks all around*). Where, mothah?

CHARMIAN. You mean that I am to pretend that I am his daughter?

MRS. C. B. That's precisely what I mean.

CHARMIAN. But it's impossible. He'll probably remember her—

MRS. C. B. Nonsense. He hasn't seen her for ten or twelve years. He knows nothing about her. Fate is playing right into our hands. Don't you see how easy it will be? He is old and an invalid and he's going back to Texas tonight. I'll introduce him to Charmian, tell him that she is Judy and is happily married to my son. He'll be satisfied and probably give you a wedding present of ten or twelve thousand dollars. Then when he returns to Texas it will be easy to make him send us two or three hundred a month.

CHARMIAN. But I'm afraid. It's blackmail.

MRS. C. B. Nothing of the sort. It's justice. Didn't I take care of his daughter for weeks and weeks—and what did I get for it?

GEORGE. But I'm afraid, mothah; I'm afraid. I can't have Charmian get into any trouble.

MRS. C. B. Don't be a coward, George. It's a fight for a fortune and we'll win. (*Looks at watch.*) He should be here by now.

GEORGE. But suppose he starts to ask questions. Mothah, I never was good at answering questions.

MRS. C. B. That's true enough. You'd better stay in your room, George, and leave this matter to Charmian and me.

CHARMIAN. But it's a plot, an infamous plot. It's down-right robbery. We'd be stealing the money, taking it from little Judy. It's hers by right. I've done that child enough harm already, and so have you! And now you want me to impose on her father and rob her of a whole life's happiness! No, Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs, I won't do it! I won't do it!

MRS. C. B. You won't?

CHARMIAN. I will work and George will work. We can make an honest living. We can give up this fine house and all this pretense of being wealthy. We can live out in the suburbs in a little cottage and work for our money. I don't want a fortune, I don't want to rob little Judy Elliott of what rightfully belongs to her, and I won't do it!

MRS. C. B. This is *my* affair. You'll do just as I say. What work could you or George do? Do you think we could live on twenty or thirty dollars a week? No! You say you won't rob the child, do you? Well, how about robbing my son?

CHARMIAN. What do you mean?

MRS. C. B. I mean that when you married him you robbed him of the fortune that should have rightfully been his. I had it all mapped out. He would have married Judy the next day and the money would have come to them. But, no! You stepped in with your well-laid plans and married him. Now you've made him a pauper—a man living from hand to mouth—

CHARMIAN (*interrupting*). No, no!

MRS. C. B. And when I offer you an opportunity to recover the chance for the fortune, you refuse. This is your love for my boy! This is your gratitude.

(Door bell rings off stage at right.)

GEORGE. There's someone at the door.

MRS. C. B. It's he, Charmian, will you help us? Speak—I am waiting for your decision.

CHARMIAN *(after a mental struggle)*. Yes, I'll help you.

GEORGE. Shall I let him in?

MRS. C. B. No, you're liable to spoil everything. You go upstairs. Leave him to me.

GEORGE *(crosses to door at left)*. Now, mothah, don't get us into any trouble. I'd hate to be in trouble. *(Exits at left.)*

MRS. C. B. I'll let him in. *(Exit at right.)*

CHARMIAN *(crosses to left)*. Oh, why did I promise to help her? I can't do it. I can't do it!

Enter MRS. C. B. from right, followed by SEPTIMUS, disguised as an old man.

MRS. C. B. Come in, Mr. Elliott. Your daughter is here. Judy!

CHARMIAN *(meets SEPTIMUS at left of center, Mrs. C. B. at right front)*. Are you my father?

SEPTIMUS *(takes both her hands, looks at her earnestly, speaks in a changed voice)*. Are you Judy Elliott?

MRS. C. B. Of course she is. Don't you recognize her? This is the little girl that you left at the poor-house eleven years ago.

SEPTIMUS. It don't seem possible.

CHARMIAN. Won't you sit down? *(They sit, Mrs. C. B. at right, the others at left.)*

MRS. C. B. You know, of course, that Judy has married.

SEPTIMUS *(looks at Mrs. C. B.)*. Married?

MRS. C. B. Yes, to my son. She is now Mrs. George Chiggerson.

SEPTIMUS. So you are married, are you?

CHARMIAN. Yes, father. I am Mrs. George Chiggerson.

SEPTIMUS. So you thought you'd steal a march on the old man, hey? How long you been married?

CHARMIAN. About three weeks.

SEPTIMUS. Young man got any money?

CHARMIAN. A little, father, but it was a love match.

SEPTIMUS. Love, hey? Them kind of matches allers burn out quickest.

CHARMIAN. I love George Chiggerson and he loves me.

SEPTIMUS. Did the old lady take pretty good care of you?

MRS. C. B. Old lady! The idea!

CHARMIAN. The best in the world.

SEPTIMUS. Well, I'm glad to hear you're married. I wanter see your husband.

MRS. C. B. He isn't here just now.

SEPTIMUS. I got to see him. You see I want to make some arrangements.

MRS. C. B. Oh, you can arrange everything with me.

SEPTIMUS. There ain't any hurry about it. I'm going to be here some time.

MRS. C. B. Be here some time?

SEPTIMUS. That's what I said.

MRS. C. B. But I thought you intended to return to Texas tonight.

SEPTIMUS. I changed my mind. When my little girl said she was married I thought it was my duty to stay right here with her for a while.

CHARMIAN. But that is impossible.

SEPTIMUS. Why so?

MRS. C. B. Because there isn't any room.

SEPTIMUS. Then you gotter make room. I'm here for life. I'm going to spend my declining years with my little girl and her husband. (*To* CHARMIAN.) You wouldn't go back on your old dad, would you?

CHARMIAN (*hesitates*). No, but you see—

SEPTIMUS. You said he had some money. I reckon he can support us.

MRS. C. B. Support you? It would be better for you to support them.

SEPTIMUS. Why, I couldn't afford it.

MRS. C. B. With your ranches and orchards and all your money?

SEPTIMUS. Say, there ain't nothin' to that story. I ain't got no ranches or orchards or money. Took my last cent to make this yere trip up here from Texas.

MRS. C. B. You mean that you are a poor man? (*Rises slowly.*)

SEPTIMUS (*rises, faces her*). Yes, ma'am, that's exactly what I do mean. I never had nuthin', ain't got nuthin' and never expect to have nuthin'.

MRS. C. B. Then you'd better go back to Texas. That's all, sir. Good-day. (*Crosses to left.*)

CHARMIAN (*rises*). Now, mother—

MRS. C. B. You have deceived me, sir, and the best thing you can do is to leave my house.

SEPTIMUS (*sits at right, crosses legs*). Not me. I'm goin' to live with my little daughter and her husband.

MRS. C. B. Then you'll have to find her first.

SEPTIMUS. Find her? There she is.

MRS. C. B. Charmian, tell him the truth.

SEPTIMUS. Charmian? Her name is Judy Susannah, named after my grandmother.

CHARMIAN. There is a mistake, sir. I am not your daughter.

SEPTIMUS. Not my daughter? Then you two have been deceiving me.

MRS. C. B. You're not the man we thought you were. You'll probably find your daughter back in the Splinterville poor-house. Now, go!

SEPTIMUS (*rises*). I won't go. This yere is a game you're playin'. I ain't a goin' till I've got my daughter, and there she is.

CHARMIAN. I am not your daughter! My father is alive and well. He lives here in town.

MRS. C. B. Now will you go, or shall I call an officer?

SEPTIMUS. I won't go unless you pay me five hundred dollars to keep this whole matter out of the newspapers.

MRS. C. B. We'll see about that. (*Goes to door at left.*)

CHARMIAN. Mother, where are you going?

MRS. C. B. I am going to telephone to the police. (*Exit at left.*)

CHARMIAN (*goes to SEPTIMUS*). You'd better go. She'll have you arrested.

SEPTIMUS. Oh, she will, hey? Maybe there's two kin play at that game. How about her tryin' to pass you off as my daughter? Blackmail, my lady, as plain as the nose on your face.

Enter GEORGE from left.

CHARMIAN (*goes to him at left*). George, see if you can persuade him to go quietly. Mother is calling the police.

GEORGE. What for?

CHARMIAN. He mistook me for his daughter. And he hasn't any fortune at all.

GEORGE (*at left*). Then it's all off?

CHARMIAN (*at left center*). Yes. We'll all go to work. We'll buy that little moving-picture house on the north side and make an honest living.

SEPTIMUS (*at right*). Is that the feller you was goin' to palm off on me as a son-in-law?

CHARMIAN. This is my husband.

SEPTIMUS. Then thank goodness you ain't my daughter.

Enter MRS. C. B. from left.

MRS. C. B. I have sent for the police.

SEPTIMUS. Very good, madam. I'll have them investigate this little story about my daughter.

GEORGE (*to MRS. C. B. at left*). Mothah, you'd better let him alone.

CHARMIAN (*at left of center*). Mr. Elliott, please go at once. I'll do everything in my power to help you find your daughter.

SEPTIMUS (*at right*). I reckon the police will do that.

Enter OCEY from right, dressed in police uniform.

OCEY. Who sent for the police?

MRS. C. B. (*meeting him at center, CHARMIAN goes to GEORGE at left*). I did. I am Mrs. Chiggerson-Boggs and I want you to make that person leave my house.

SEPTIMUS (*at right*). I ain't goin' to leave without my daughter.

OCEY (*at center*). Who is your daughter?

SEPTIMUS. Judy Elliott from Splinterville.

OCEY. Then your daughter is here.

OTHERS (*astonished*). Here?

OCEY (*goes to door at right*). Judy, come on in. It's all right. Your paw's done come for you.

Enter JUDY and JULIETTA from right.

JUDY. Where is he? Where is my daddy?

SEPTIMUS. Right here, honey. (*Embraces her down right of stage.*)

JULIETTA. Ocey!

OCEY. Julietta! (*Embraces her at center of stage.*)

SEPTIMUS (*in natural voice*). At last I have found you.

JUDY. You ain't my daddy at all. Who are you?

SEPTIMUS (*throws off wig and whiskers*). Septimus Green, at your service.

ALL. Sep Green!

MRS. C. B. (*sinks in chair at left*). Oh, this is terrible.

SEPTIMUS (*crosses to her*). Madam, I'd like to sell you a copy of my little book. It is called "How to Detect Black-mail," and you'll find your full case described on page 129.

JUDY. But where is my father? Sep, where is my father?

SEPTIMUS (*goes to her at right*). I brought him back to you. He's over at the hotel waiting for us.

GEORGE. But he has lost all his money, hasn't he? (*At left with CHARMIAN.*)

SEPTIMUS (*at right front with JUDY*). Yep, all but about three hundred thousand dollars. And we're going to move back to Texas and I'm to be his ranch foreman, me and Judy.

CHARMIAN. Well, money doesn't make happiness. We're going to buy a moving-picture house over on the north

side. George is going to run the machine and I'm going to take the tickets at the door.

MRS. C. B. And I'm going to play the piano.

GEORGE. Why, mothah!

MRS. C. B. That is, if you and Charmian will allow me to be around.

OCEY (*at rear center with JULIETTA*). And Julietta and I will come in every night on free passes. So I guess we'll all end up happy after all.

MRS. C. B. Judy, can you ever forgive me?

JUDY. I reckon I can. No matter what you did, it's all come out right at last. I'm the happiest girl in the whole country, jest 'cause I got my Sep.

SEPTIMUS. And I wouldn't trade places with a millionaire. Me and my little clodhopper!

CURTAIN.

Mrs. Tubbs Does Her Bit

By WALTER BEN HARE

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Patriotic comedy-drama, in 3 acts; 7 males, 7 females (4 are children, 2 boys, 2 girls). Time, 2¼ hours. Scenes: Interior and a camp at midnight, very easily arranged. Characters: Mrs. Mollie Tubbs, a patriotic mother. Aunt Serepty, a wealthy relative. Clingie Vine, a romantic old maid. Mrs. Hickey, a kind neighbor. Elsie, a Red Cross nurse. James Tubbs, one of Uncle Sam's boys. Simon Rubbels, the close-fisted landlord. Major Pepper, commander of the camp. Nelson and Graham, privates. Queenie Tubbs, aged eleven. Scuffles, aged ten. Billy, a little feller. Punky, the Tubbs toddler. A refined and delightful play featuring a woman's patriotism. The story is intensely dramatic and abounds in patriotic sentiment, relieved by several scenes of broad but refined comedy. Mrs. Tubbs gives her son to her country and does her bit when she takes his place as sentry at the training camp at midnight. A Red Cross nurse lends a romantic touch to the play and a funny old maid and two mischievous children furnish the comedy. The audience will love this poor widow washwoman of Shantytown, who at the darkest moment has a ready smile and a song of cheer in her heart.

MRS. TUBBS SAYS:

"A song and a smile makes life worth while.

Eggs has riz sump'm scand'lous. How do the hens know there's a war over in Europe?

Some folks 'ud rather grunt than smile; I ain't never heard a hog laugh yet, but they certainly can grunt.

I know that if I had ten sons, I'd give each one of 'em to my country and be proud to say, 'America, here's my boy!'

I ain't never received nothin' yet from my rich relations except advice and picture post-cards and I ain't goin' to ask 'em now.

I ain't much, I know that, I'm only a poor widow washwoman livin' in the slums of Shantytown, but I'm an American and I'll stand up fer my country and my flag.

Maybe Simon Rubbels ain't as bad as he's painted, but there ain't no angel wings a-sproutin' out of his shoulders and I've noticed that his breath smells a heap more like brimstone than it does like angel cake.

I've made up my mind and when Mollie Tubbs makes up her mind the hull United States army and navy to boot can't unmake it. Gimme that rifle! I'm doing my bit fer humanity and my native land.

If every black cloud had a cyclone in it, the world 'ud a been blowed to toothpicks long ago.

And quit lookin' like a undertaker!

It's the little things in life that count, Scuffles. The little things. Why you might have a di'mond ring on your finger and a gold watch in your pocket, but if you only got one suspender button and that busts, then where are you?

Hand to hand, foot to foot, shoulder to shoulder they march, the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the college man and the day laborer, the millionaire and the tramp, the white and the black, with one idea in their minds, one purpose in their hearts, one voice in their ears, a voice that says 'Carry on, and on, and on, forward for God and home and The Star-Spangled Banner!'

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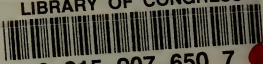
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